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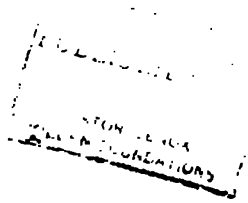

The Sublime and the Ridiculous

NEW YORK. G. P. PUTNAM.

THE

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OF

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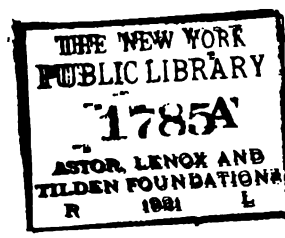

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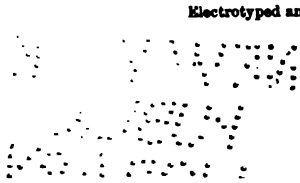

PUBLISHERS' ADVERTISEMENT.

THE contents of this volume have been collected chiefly from the later volumes of the *Comic Annual* and from *Hood's Magazine*. From the latter work is taken the admirable novel of "Our Family," which was left unfinished at the author's death. Under the general title of "Autobiographical Papers," the editor has brought together such portions of HOOD'S writings as seem adapted to illustrate his literary life and character, as well as those which were especially designed for that purpose. The various sources from which these papers are derived are sufficiently indicated in the text.

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OUR FAMILY:

A DOMESTIC NOVEL.

OUR FAMILY.

A DOMESTIC NOVEL.

CHAPTER I.

WE ARE BORN.

THE clock struck seven —

But the clock was a story-teller; for the true time was One, as marked by the short hand on the dial. The truth was, our family clock — an old-fashioned machine, in a tall mahogany case, and surmounted by three golden balls, as if it had belonged to the Lombards — was apt to chime very capriciously.

However, it struck seven just as my father came down stairs from the bedroom, rubbing his hands, and whistling in a whisper, as his custom was when he was well pleased, and walking along the passage somewhat more than usual on his tiptoes, with a jaunty gait, he stepped into the sitting-room to communicate the good news. But there was nobody in the parlor except the little fairy-like gentleman, who walked jauntily to meet him, rubbing his hands, and silently whistling, in the old mirror, — a large circular one, presided over by some bronze bird, sacred perhaps to Esculapius, and therefore carrying a gilt bolus, attached by a chain to his beak.

From the parlor my father went to the surgery: but there was nobody there; so he repaired, perforce, for sympathy into the kitchen, where he found the maid, Kezia, sitting on a wooden chair, backed close against the whitewashed wall, her hands clasped in her lap, and her apron thrown over her head, apparently asleep and snoring, but in reality praying half aloud.

"Well, Kizzy, it 's all happily over."

Kezia jumped up on her legs, and having acknowledged, by a bob, her master's presence, inquired eagerly "which sects?"

"Doublets, Kizzy, doublets. A brace of boys!"

"What, twins! O, gimini!" exclaimed the overjoyed Kezia, her cheeks for a while glowing both of the same color. "And all doing well, missis and babes?"

"Bravely — famously — mother and all!"

"The Lord preserve her!" said Kezia, with emphatic fervor — "the Lord preserve her and her progeny," pronouncing the last word so that it would have rhymed with mahogany.

"Progeny — with a soft *g*," muttered my father, who had once been a schoolmaster, and had acquired the habit of correcting "cake-ology."

"Well, prodge, then," murmured Kezia, her cheeks again looking, but only for a moment, both of a color. For, by a freak of nature, one side of her face, from her eye to the corner of her mouth, was blotched with what is called a claret-mark — a large irregular patch of deep crimson, which my father, fond of odd coincidences, declared was of the exact shape of *Florida* in the map. Be that as it might, her face, except when she blushed, exhibited a diversity of color quite allegorical, one side as sanguine as Hope, and the other as pallid as Fear.

Now, a claret-mark is generally supposed to be "born with the individual;" whereas Kezia attributed her disfigurement to a juvenile face-ache, to relieve which she had applied to the part a hot cabbage-leaf, but gathered unluckily from the red pickling brassica instead of the green one, and so by sleeping all night on it, her cheek had extracted the color. An explanation, offered in perfect good faith; for Kezia had no personal vanity to propitiate. She had no more charms, she knew, than a cat — not any cat, but our own old shabby tabby, with her scrubby skin, a wall eye, and a docked tail. But in moral Beauty — if ever there had been an annual Book of it — Kezia might have had her portrait at full length.

Her figure and face were of the commonest human clay, cast in the plainest mould. Her clumsy feet and legs, her

coarse red arms and hands, and dumpy fingers, her ungainly trunk, and hard features, were admirably adapted for that rough drudgery to which she unsparingly devoted them, as if only fit to be scratched, chapped, burnt, sodden, sprained, frostbitten, and stuck with splinters. And if sometimes her joints stiffened, her back ached, and her limbs flagged under the severity of her labors, was it not all for the good of that family to which she sacrificed herself with the feudal devotion of a Highlander to his clan? In short, she combined in one ungainly bundle of household virtues, all the best qualities of our domestic animals and beasts of burden — loving and faithful as the dog, strong as a horse, patient as an ass, and temperate as a camel. At nineteen years of age she had engaged herself to my mother as Servant of All Work; and truly, from that hour, no kind of labor, hot or cold, wet or dry, clean or dirty, had she shunned: never inquiring whether it belonged to her place, but toiling, a voluntary Slave, in all departments; nay, as if her daily work were not enough, sleep-walking by night into parlor and kitchen, to clean knives, wash up crockery, dust chairs, or polish tables!

To female servants in general, and to those in particular who advertise for small families, where a footman is kept, the advent of two more children would have been an unwelcome event: perhaps equivalent to a warning. Not so with Kezia. Could one have looked through her homely bosom into her heart, or through her plain forehead into her brain, they would have been found rejoicing beforehand in the double, double toil and trouble of attending on the twins. My father's thoughts were turned in the same direction, but with a gravity that put an end to his sub-whistling, and led him, half in jest and half in earnest, to moralize aloud.

"Two at once, Kizzy, two at once — there will be sharp work for us all. Two to nurse — two to suckle — two to wean — two to vaccinate (he was sure not to forget that!) — two to put to their feet — "

"Bless them!" ejaculated Kezia.

"Two to cut their teeth — two to have measles, and hooping-cough — "

"Poor things!" murmured Kezia.

"Ay, and what 's worse, two more backs to clothe; and two more bellies to fill — and I can't ride on two horses, and pay two visits at once."

"You must double your fees, master."

"No, no, Kizzy, that won't do. My patients grumble at them already."

"Then I 'd double their physicking, and order two draughts, and two powders, and two boxes of pills, instead of one."

"But how will they like such double drugging, Kizzy — supposing that their constitutions are strong enough to stand it?"

Kezia was silent. She had thrown out her suggestion for the benefit of the family; and beyond that limited circle her mind never revolved. Her sympathies began, and, like Domestic Charity, ended at home. Society, and the large family of human kind in general, she left to shift for themselves.

The conversation having thus dropped, my father crept up stairs again, to see how matters were going on overhead; whilst the maid proceeded to answer a muffled knock at the front-door, followed by an attempt to ring the night-bell, but which had been completely dumbfounded by Kezia with paper and rag. The appellant was Mr. Postle, the medical assistant.

"A nice night for a ride through the Fens," grumbled the deputy-doctor, shaking himself in his great coat like a wet water-dog, before he followed the maid into the kitchen, where he seated himself in his steaming clothes before the fire.

"Mr. Postle!"

Mr. Postle looked up at the speaker, and saw her hard features convulsively struggling into what bore some distant resemblance to a smile.

"Mr. Postle!" and her voice broke into a sort of hysterical chuckle. "You don't ask the news?"

"What news?"

"What! Why, there 's an increase of the family!" said Kezia, her face crimson on both sides with the domestic triumph. "We 've got twins!"

"Humph!" grunted Mr. Postle. "Better one strong one, than two weakly ones."

"Weakly!" exclaimed Kezia; "why, they 're little Herculuses! Our babbies always are."

A suppressed laugh caused the assistant and Kezia to look round, and they beheld, close beside them, the nurse, Mrs.

Prideaux. It was one of her peculiarities that she never shuffled about slipshod, or in creaking leather; but crept along noiselessly as a ghost, in a pair of list moccasons; and thus taking advantage of my father's visit to the bedchamber, she had descended for a little change to the kitchen.

A very superior woman was Mrs. Prideaux: quite the attendant for an aristocratic invalid, lying in down, beneath an embroidered quilt, and on a laced pillow. She was never seen in that slovenly dishabille, so characteristic of females of her profession; no, you never saw *her* in a slatternly colored cotton gown drawn up through the pocket-holes, and disclosing a greasy nankeen petticoat with ticking pockets — nor in a yellow nightcap, tied over the head and under the chin with a blue and white bird's-eye handkerchief — looking like a Hybrid, between a washerwoman and a watchman. A pure white dimity robe, tied with pale-green ribbons, was her undress. Her personal advantages were very great. Her figure was tall and genteel; her features were small and regular — so different to those dowdy Dodo-like creatures, bloated, and ugly as sin, who are commonly called "nusses." Then she did not take snuff; nor ever drank gin or rum, neat or diluted: a glass of foreign wine or liqueur, or brandy, if genuine Cognac, she would accept; but beer, never. No one ever heard her sniff, or saw her spit, or trim the candle-snuff with her fingers. And if ever she dozed in her chair, as nurses sometimes must, she never snored: but was lady-like even in her sleep. Her language was not only free from vulgarisms and provincialisms, but so choice as to be generally described as "book English." You never heard Mrs. Prideaux blessing her stars, or invoking Goody Gracious, or asking Lawk to have mercy on her, or asseverating by Jingo. She would have died ere she would have complained of her lines, her rheumatiz, her lumbargo, or the molligrubs. Such broad, coarse words could never pass those thin, compressed lips. But perhaps the best test of her refined phraseology was, that though the word was so current with mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, gossips, and servants of both sexes, that it rang in her ears, at least once in every five minutes, she never said — babby.

In nothing, however, was Mrs. Prideaux more distinguished from the sisterhood, than the tone of her manners: so affable,

yet so dignified — and above all, that serene self-possession under any circumstances, supposed to accompany high breeding and noble birth. Thus, nobody ever saw her flustered, or non-plushed, or at her wit's ends, or all in a twitter, or narvous, or ready to jump out of her skin; but always calm, cool, and correct. She hinted, indeed, that she was a reduced gentlewoman, deterred by an independent spirit from accepting the assistance of wealthy and titled connections. In short, she was a superior woman, so superior, that many a calculating visiter who would have tipped another nurse with a shilling, felt compelled to present a half-crown, if not a whole one, to Mrs. Prideaux, and even then with some anxiety as to her reception of the offering.

Such was the prepossessing person, whose presence notwithstanding was so unwelcome to the medical assistant, that her appearance in the kitchen seemed the signal for his departure. He rose up instantly from his chair, but halted a moment to ask Kezia if there had been any applications at the surgery in his absence.

"Yes, the boy from the curate's, for some more of the paradoxical lozenges: he says he can't preach without 'em."

"Paregorical. Well?"

"And Widow Wakeman with a complaint — "

"Ah! in her hip."

"No, in her mouth, that she have tried the Scouring Drops, and they won't clean marble."

"I should think not — they 're for sheep. Well?"

"Only a prescription to make up. Pulv. something — aqua, something — summoned, and cockleary."

"Anything else?"

"O yes, a message from the great house about the Brazen monkey."

"Curse the Brazil monkey!" and snatching up a candle, Mr. Postle yawned a good-night apiece to the females, and with half-closed eyes stumbled off to bed.

"A quick-tempered person," observed Mrs. Prideaux, as soon as the subject of her comment was beyond earshot.

"Yes, rather caloric," she meant choleric. As an exception to her simple habits Kezia was fond of hard words, perhaps because they were hard, just as she liked hard work.

"Well, Kezia, you observed the clock?"

"The clock, ma'am?"

"Yes. The precise date of birth is of vast importance to human destiny."

"O, for their fortune-telling! I never thought of it — never!" And the shocked Kezia began to heap on herself, and her sieve of a head, the most bitter reproaches.

"No matter," said the nurse. "I *did* mark the time exactly." And as she spoke she drew from her bosom, and gazed at a handsome enamelled watch, with a gold dial, and a hand that marked the seconds.

"You are aware that one of the twin infants was born before, and the other after, the hour of midnight?"

"No, really!" exclaimed Kezia, her dull eyes brightening at the prospect of a double festival. "Why, then, there will be two celebrated birthdays!"

"The natal hour involves matters of much deeper importance than the keeping of birthdays," replied the nurse, with a startling solemnity of tone and manner. "Look here, Kezia," and returning the watch to her bosom, she drew forth a little blue morocco pocketbook, from which she extracted a paper inscribed with various signs and a diagram. "Do you know what this is?"

"I suppose," said Kezia, turning the paper upside down, after having looked at it in every other direction, "it is some of Harry O'Griffis's characters."

"Not precisely hieroglyphics," said the nurse. "It is a scheme for casting nativities. See, here are the Twelve Houses, — the first, the House of Life; the second, of Riches; the third, of Brethren; the fourth, of Parents; the fifth, of Children; the sixth, of Health; the seventh, of Marriage; the eighth, of Death; the ninth, of Religion; the tenth, of Dignities; the eleventh, of Friends; and the twelfth, of Enemies."

"And in which of those houses were our two dear babbies born?" eagerly asked Kezia.

Mrs. Prideaux looked grave, sighed, and shook her head so ominously, that Kezia turned as pale as marble, her very claret-mark fading into a scarcely perceptible tinge of pink.

"Don't say it — don't say it!" she stammered, while the big tears gathered in her eyes: "What! cut off precockshiously like blighted spring buds!"

"I did not say death," replied the nurse. But there are other malignant signs and sinister aspects, that foretell misfortunes of another kind — for instance, poverty. But hush —" and she held up a warning forefinger whilst her voice subsided into a whisper.

"I hear your master. Leave your door ajar, and I will come to you presently in your own room." So saying, she rose and glided spectre-like from the kitchen — where she left Kezia staring through a haze, damp as a Scotch mist, at a vision of two little half-naked and half-famished babes turning away, loathingly, from a dose of parish gruel, administered by a pauper nurse, with a workhouse spoon.

CHAPTER II.

OUR HOROSCOPE.

A LONG hour had worn away, and still Kezia sat in her attic with the door ajar, anxiously expecting the promised visit from the mysterious nurse. Too excited to sleep, she had not undressed, but setting up a rushlight, seated herself on the bed, and gave full scope to her foreboding fancies, till all the round bright spots, projected from the night shade on the walls and ceiling, appeared like so many evil planets portending misfortunes to the new-born. From these reveries she was roused by a very low, but very audible whisper, every syllable clear and distinct as the sound of a bell.

"Whose room is that in front?"

"Mr. Postle's."

"Can he overhear us through the partition?"

"No, not a word."

"You are certain of it?"

"Yes, I have tried it."

"Very good." And Mrs. Prideaux having first carefully closed the door, seated herself beside the other female on the bed. "I have left the mother and her lovely twins in a sound sleep."

"The little cherubs!" exclaimed Kezia. "And must they,

will they, sink so low in the world, poor things! Are they unrevocably marked out for such unprosperous fortunes in life?"

"They must — they will — they are. Listen, Kezia! I have not been many days, not many hours under this roof; but my art tells me that the wolf already has more than looked in at the door — that the master of this house knows, by experience, the bitter trials of a poor professional man — the difficulties, the cruel difficulties, of one who has to keep up a respectable appearance with very limited means."

"The Lord knows we have!" exclaimed Kezia, quite thrown off her guard. "The struggles we have had to keep up our genteelity! The shifts we have been obligated to make — as well as our neighbors," she added hastily, and not without a twinge of mortification at having let down the family by her disclosures.

"I understand you," said Mrs. Prideaux, with a series of significant little nods. "Harassed, worried to death, for the means to meet the tradesmen's bills, or to take up overdue acceptances. I know it all. The best china, and linen parted with to help to make up a sum (Kezia uttered a low inward groan), the plate in pledge (another moan from Kezia), and the head of the family even obliged to absent himself, to avoid personal arrest."

"She is a witch, sure enough," said Kezia to herself. "She knows about the baileys."

"Yes — there have been sheriff's officers in this very house," continued the nurse, as if reading the secret thought of the other. "Nor are the circumstances of your master much mended even at the present time," — and she fixed her dark eyes on the pale-blue ones, that seemed to contract under their gaze like the feline organ under excess of light — "at this moment, when there are not six bottles of what, by courtesy, we will call sherry, in his cellar, nor as many guineas in his bureau."

"Why, as to the wine," stammered Kezia, "we have had company lately, and I would not answer for a whole dozen; but as regards the pecunery, I feel sure — I know — I'm positive there 's nigh a score of golden guineas in the house, at this blessed moment — let alone the silver and the copper."

"Your own, perhaps?"

Kezia's face seemed suddenly suffused all over with claret, and felt as hot too as if the wine had been mulled, at being thus caught out in an equivocation, invented purely for the credit of the family.

"In a word," said the nurse, "your master is a needy man; and the addition of two children to his burdens will hardly improve his finances."

"But our practice may increase," said Kezia. "We may have money left to us in a legacy — or win a grand prize in the lottery."

"I wish it was on the horoscope," said Mrs. Prideaux, looking up at the ceiling, as if appealing through it to the planetary bodies. "But the stars say otherwise. Rash speculations — heavy losses by bad debts — and a ruinous Chancery suit, as indicated by the presence of Saturn in the twelfth house."

"Satan!" ejaculated Kezia, with a visible shudder. "If *he*'s in the house, there'll be chancery suits no doubt, for he is in league they say with all the lawyers, from the judges down to the 'turneys."

"And with litigation," said the nurse, "will come rags and poverty, ay, down to the second and third generations."

"What, common begging — from door to door?"

"Alas, yes — mendicity and pauperism."

"Never!" said Kezia, with energy, starting up from the bed, and holding forth her clumsy coarse hands, with their ruddy digits, like two bunches of radishes to tempt a purchaser, — "never! whilst I can work with these ten fingers!"

"Of course not, my worthy creature, only don't be quite so vehement — of course not. And, as far as my own humble means extend, you shall not want my poor co-operation. I have already devoted my nursing-fee and perquisites, whatever may be the amount, towards a scheme that will help to secure the little innocents from absolute want. There is a society, a sort of masonic society of benevolent individuals, privately established for the endowment of such unfortunate little mortals. For a small sum at the birth of a child, they undertake to pay him, after a certain age, a yearly annuity in proportion to the original deposit — a heavenly plan, devised by a few real practical Christians, who delight in doing good by

stealth; and especially to such forlorn beings as are born under the influence of a malignant star. Now the year that threatens our dear darling twins is the seventh; a tender age, Kezia, to be left to the charity of the wide world!"

Poor Kezia turned as white as ashes; and for some minutes sat speechless, writhing her body and wringing her hands, as if to wring tears out of her finger-ends. At last, in a faltering voice, she inquired how much seventeen guineas would grow into, per annum, in seven years.

"Why, let me see;" and Mrs. Prideaux began to calculate by the help of a massive silver pencil-case and her tablets; "seventeen guineas, for seven years, with interest — and interest upon interest — simple and compound — with the bonus, added by the society — why, it would positively be a little fortune — a good twenty pounds a year — enough at any rate to secure one, or even two persons, from absolute starvation."

Kezia made no reply, but darted off to a large iron-bound trunk which she unlocked, and then drew from it a little round wooden box, the construction of which, every one who has swallowed Ching's worm medicine, so celebrated some thirty or forty years ago, will very readily remember. Unscrewing one half of this box with a shrill screeching sound, that jarred the nerves of Mrs. Prideaux, and set all her small white teeth on edge, Kezia poured into her own lap, from a compartment formerly occupied by oval white lozenges, ten full weight guineas of the coinage of King George the Third; then turning the box, and opening the opposite half, with a similar *skreek*, and a fresh shock to the nerves and teeth of the genteel nurse, she emptied from the division, once filled with oval brown lozenges, eight half-guineas, and nine seven-shilling pieces; in all, seventeen guineas, the sum total of her hoarded savings since she had been at service.

"Then, take them," she said, holding out her apron by the corners, with the precious glittering contents towards the nurse.

"Bless you — bless you for a true Samaritan!" replied Mrs. Prideaux, passing her hand lightly across her eyelashes — whilst something like a tear glistened upon one of her fingers, but the radiance came from a brilliant ring. "I will add this bauble to the stock," said the nurse, drawing it off, and throwing it into Kezia's apron. "But, my good girl, I am

afraid you have contributed your all. You ought to consider yourself a little — you may be ill — or out of place. At any rate, reserve a trifle against a rainy day."

"No, no — don't consider me — take it all — all, every penny of it," sobbed Kezia. "The poor dear innocents! they are as welcome to it as my own little ones — at least, if I had any."

"To be sure it is for *them*, — one two, three," said the nurse, counting the pieces separately into a stout green-silk purse with gilt rings: "seventeen guineas exactly. With my own poor mite, and the ring, say twenty, or five-and-twenty, to be invested for the dear twins in the Benevolent Endowment Society, for children born under Malignant Planets."

"O, I do wish," exclaimed Kezia, with the abruptness of a sudden inspiration, "I do wish I knew the fortune-teller that prophesies for Moore's Almanac!"

The nurse turned her keen dark eyes on the speaker, and for a minute regarded her, as if, in the popular phrase, she would have looked her through and through. But the scrutiny satisfied her; for she said in a calm tone, that the name in question was very well known, as Francis Moore, physician.

"But people say," objected Kezia, "that Francis Moore is only his alibi," she meant alias.

"It is *not her* name," replied Mrs. Prideaux, with a marked staccato emphasis on the negative and the pronoun. "But that is a secret. And now, mark me, Kezia — not a syllable of this matter to any one, and least of all to the parents. The troubles we know are burdensome enough to bear, without an insight into futurity. And to foresee such a melancholy prospect predestined to the offspring of their own loins."

"O, not for the world!" exclaimed Kezia, clasping her hands together. "It would kill them outright — it would break both their hearts! As for me, it don't signify. I'm used to fretting. O, if you knew the wretched sleepless hours I've enjoyed, night after night, when master was in his commercial crisuses, with unaccommodating bills — he'd have had that money long and long ago, if I had had the courage to offer it to him, but he's as proud on some points as Lucifer. And, to be sure, we've not been reduced more than our betters, perhaps, at a chance time, when they could not get in

their rents — or the steward absconded with them — or the stocks fell suddenly — or the bank was short of cash for the dividends, or the key of the bureau — "

She stopped short, for Mrs. Prideaux had vanished. So after an exclamation of surprise, and a thoughtful turn or two up and down her chamber, the devoted Kezia threw herself on her knees beside the bed, and prayed fervently for her master, her mistress, and the dear little progeny, till in that devout posture she fell asleep.

CHAPTER III.

WE ARE NAMED.

It is assuredly a mercy for humankind that we are born into this world of folly as we are, mere purblind, sprawling, oysterly squabs, with no more *nous* than a polypus, instead of coming into it with our wits ready sharpened, and wide awake as young weasels! Above all, it is providential that we are so much more accessible to lachrymose than ludicrous impressions; more prone to tears, squallings, sobs, sighs, and blubberings, than to broad grins or crowing like chanticleer. For, while at a royal or imperial establishment, one Fool has generally been deemed sufficient; at the court of a Lilliputian Infant or Infanta, it seems to be held indispensable that every person who enters the presence must play the zany or buffoon, and act, talk, sing, cut, and pull, such antics, gibberish, nonsense, capers, and grimaces, that nine tenths of the breed of babies, if their fancies were at all ticklesome, must needs die of ruptured spleen, bursten bloodvessels, split sides, or shattered diaphragms. Yes, nine tenths of the species would go off in a guffaw, like the ancient who lost his breath in a cachinnation, at seeing an ass eating figs. For truly that donkey was nothing to the donkeys, nor his freak worth one of his figs, compared to the farcicalities exhibited by those he and she animals who congregate around the cots and cradles of the nursery.

Thus, had our own little vacant goggle-eyes at all appreci-

ated, or our ignorant sealed ears at all comprehended, the absurdities that were perpetrated, said and sung, daily and hourly, before and around us, my Twin-Brother and myself must inevitably, in the first week, have choked in our pap, and died, strangled in convulsion fits of inextinguishable laughter, or perhaps jaw-locked by a collapse of the overstrained risible muscles.

It would have been quite enough to shatter the tender lungs and midriff of a precocious humorist, to have only seen that ungainly figure which so constantly hung over us, with that strange variegated face, grotesquely puckering, twisting, screwing its refractory features to produce such indescribable cacklings, chucklings, and chirruppings; — to have heard her drilling that impracticable peacocky voice, with its rebellious falsetto, and all its mazy wanderings, from nasal to guttural, from guttural to pectoral, and even to ventral, with all its involuntary quaverings, gugglings, and gratings, — into a soothing lullaby, or cradle-hymn. It must have asphyxiated an infant, with any turn for the comic, to have seen and heard that Iö-like creature with her pied red and white face, lowing —

"There 's no ox a-near thy bed;"

or that astounding flourish of tune, accompanied by an appropriate brandishing of the mottled upper limbs, with which she warbled —

"'Tis thy Kizzy sits beside thee,
And her harms shall be thy guard."

It was ten thousand mercies, I say, that the stolid gravity of babyhood was proof against such sounds and spectacles: not to forget that domestic conclave, with its notable debate as to the names to be given to us in our baptism.

"For my own part," said my mother, enthroned in a huge dimity covered easy-chair, "I should like some sort of names we are accustomed to couple together, so as to make them out for a pair of twins."

"Nothing more easy," said my father. "There 's Castor and Pollux."

"Was Castor the inventor of castor-oil?" inquired my mother, in the very simplicity of her heart.

"Why, not exactly," replied my father, suddenly rubbing his nose as if something had tickled him. "He was invented himself." An answer, by the way, which served my other parent as a riddle for the rest of the day.

"And what was their persuasion?"

"Heathen, of course."

"Then they shall never stand sponsors for children of mine," said my mother, whose religious sentiments were strictly orthodox. "But are there no other twin brothers celebrated in history?"

"Yes," replied my father. "Valentine and Orson."

"Why, one—one—one of them," exclaimed Kezia, stuttering in her eagerness—"one of them was a savage, like Peter the Wild Boy, and sucked a she-bear!"

"Then *they* won't do," said my mother, in a tone of great decision.

"And Romulus and Remus are equally ineligible," said my father, "for they were suckled by a she-wolf."

"Bless me!" exclaimed my mother, lifting up her hands, "the ferocious beasts in those days must have been much tamer and gentler than in ours. I should be sorry to trust flesh and blood of mine to such succedaneums for wet-nurses."

"And what would be your choice, Kizzy?" inquired my father, turning towards the maid of all work, who, by way of employing both hands and feet, had volunteered to rock the cradle, whilst she worked at the duplicate baby-linen, so unexpectedly required.

"Why then," said Kezia, rising up to give more weight to the recommendation, "if that precious pair of infants was mine, I'd christen them Jachin and Boaz."

"The pillars of the temple"—said my father. "But suppose, Kizzy, the boys chose to go into the army or navy?"

"They would fight none the worse," said Kezia, reddening, "for having Bible names!"

"Nor better," said my father, *sotto voce*. "And now, perhaps, Mrs. Prideaux will favor us with her opinion?"

But the genteel nurse, with a sweet smile, and in her silvery voice, declined advising in such a delicate matter; only hinting, as regarded her private taste, that she preferred the

select and euphonious, as a prefix. Her own son was named Algernon Marmaduke Prideaux.

"Perhaps," said my father, leaning his head thoughtfully on one side, and scratching his ear, — "perhaps Postle could suggest something. His head 's like an Encyclopædia."

"He have," said Kezia, suspending for a moment her needlework and the rocking of the cradle. "He 's for Demon and Pithy."

"For what ! ! !" exclaimed my mother.

"Demon and Pithy.'

"Phoo, phoo — Damon and Pythias," said my father, "famous for their friendship, like David and Jonathan, in the classical times."

"Then they 're heathens, too," said my mother, "and won't do for godfathers to little Christians."

A dead pause ensued for some minutes, during which nothing was audible but my father's ghost of a whistle, and the gentle creak, creak, of the wicker cradle. The expression of my mother's face, in the mean time, changed every moment for the worse; from puzzled to anxious, from anxious to fretful.

"Well, I do wish," she exclaimed at last, just at the tail of a long sigh, — "I do wish, George, that you would think of some name for our twins. For, of course, you don't wish them to grow up anonymous like Tobit's dog !"

"Of course not," replied my father. "But I can hit on only one more suggestion. Supposing the infants to be remarkably fine ones — "

"And so they are !" put in Kezia.

"And of an uncommon size for twins — "

"They 're perfect Herculuses," cried Kezia.

"What think you of Gog and Magog ?"

"Fiddle and fiddlestick !" exclaimed my mother, in great indignation. "But I believe you would joke on your deathbed."

"Rabelais did," said my father. "But come," he added, in his genuine serious voice, for he had two, a real and a sham Abraham one, "it is my decided opinion that we could not do better than to name the children after your brother. He is wealthy, and a bachelor; and it might be to the advantage of the boys to pay him the compliment."

"I have thought of that too," said my mother. "But my brother does n't shorten well. Jinkins Rumbold is well enough; but you would n't like to hear me, when I wanted the children, calling for Jin and Rum."

"Pshaw!" said my father, "I am philosopher enough to bear that for the chance of a thumping legacy to our sons."

The genteel nurse, Mrs. Prideaux, backing this worldly policy of my father's with a few emphatic words, my mother concurred; and, accordingly, it was decided that we should be called after Jinkins Rumbold; the Jinkins being assigned to my twin brother, the first-born, and the Rumbold to my "crying self."

It is usual, however, in dedicating works, whether of Art or Nature, in one or two volumes, to ask previously the permission of the dedicatee. To obtain this consent, it was necessary to write to our Godfather Elect: and accordingly my father retired to the parlor, and seated himself, on epistolary deeds intent, at the old escrutoire. But my parent was an indifferent letter-writer at the best; and the task was even more perplexing than such labors usually are. His brother-in-law was a formalist of the old school; an antiquarian in dress, speech, manners, sentiments, and prejudices, whom it would not be prudent to address in the current and familiar style of the day. The request, besides, involved delicate considerations, as difficult to touch safely, as impossible to avoid. In this extremity, after spoiling a dozen sheets of paper and as many pens, my father had recourse, as usual, to Mr. Postle, who came, characteristically at his summons, with a graduated glass in one hand, and a bottle of vitriolic acid in the other. It was indeed one of his merits, that he identified himself, soul and body, with his business: so much so, that he was reported to have gone to an evening party with his handkerchief scented with spirits of camphor.

"Mr. Postle," said my father, "I want your opinion on a new case. Suppose a rich old hunks of a bachelor uncle, whom you wished to stand godfather to your twins, what would be your mode of treatment, by way of application to him!"

The assistant, thus called in to consultation, at once addressed himself, seriously, to the consideration of the case. But in vain he stared at the Esculapian bronze bird with the

gilt bolus suspended from its beak, and from the bird, at the framed sampler, and thence to the water-color view of some landscape in Wales, and then at the stuffed woodpecker, and in turn at each of the black profiles that flanked the mirror. There was no inspiration in any of them. At last he spoke.

"If it's all the same to you, sir, I think if we were to adjourn to the surgery, I could make up my mind on the subject. Like the authors, who write best, as I have heard, in their libraries, with their books about them, my ideas are always most confluent, when, in looking for them, my eyes rest on the drawers, and bottles, and gallipots. It's an idiosyncrasy, I believe, but so it is."

"So be it," said my father, gathering up his rough composing drafts, and hurrying, with Postle at his heels, into the surgery, where he established himself at the desk. The assistant in the mean time took a deliberate survey of all the wooden earthenware, and glass repositories for drugs, acid, salt, bitter, or saccharine; liquid, solid, or in powder.

"Now then, Postle," said my father, "how would you set to work to ask a rich old curmudgeon to stand sponsor to your children?"

"Why, then, sir," replied Postle, "in the first place, I would disclaim all idea of drawing upon him" — (and he glanced at a great bottle apparently filled with green tinsel, but marked "cantharides") — "or of bleeding him. Next I would throw in gentle stimulants, such as an appeal to family pride, and reminding him of your matrimonial mixture. Then I would exhibit the babies — in as pleasant a vehicle as possible — flavored, as it were, with cinnamon" — (he looked hard at a particular drawer) — "and scented with rose-water. As sweet as honey" — (he got that hint from a large white jar) — "and as lively as leeches." (He owed that comparison to a great fact on the counter.)

"Very good," said my father.

"After that," continued Mr. Postle, "I would recommend change of air and exercise, namely, by coming down to the christening: with an unrestricted diet. I would also promise to make up a spare bed for him, according to the best prescriptions; with a draught of something comforting to be taken the last thing at night. Say, diluted alcohol, sweet-

ened with sugar. Add a little essential oil of flummery; and in case of refusal, hint at a mortification."

"Capital! — Excellent!" exclaimed my father. And on this medical model he actually constructed a letter, before dinner-time, which might otherwise have puzzled him for a week!

CHAPTER IV.

THE bed in the spare bedroom had been aired for my father: who, between his attendance on my mother, and another lady in the same predicament, had never been out of his clothes for three successive nights. But the time for repose had arrived at last; he undressed hastily, and was standing in his nightgown and nightcap, his hand, with the extinguisher just hovering over the candle, when he heard, or thought he heard, his name called from without. He stopped his hand and listened — not a sound. It had been only the moaning of the wind, or the creaking of the great poplar at the end of the house; and the hollow cone was again descending over the flame when his name was shouted out in a peremptory tone by somebody close under the window. There could be no mistake. With a deep sigh he put down the extinguisher — opened the casement, and put forth his head. Through the gloom he could just perceive the dark figure of a man on horseback.

"Who is there?"

"Why the devil," grumbled the fellow, "have you muffled the night-bell? I've rung a dozen times."

"Why?" — replied my father — "why, because my mistress is confined."

"I wish mine was," growled the man, "in a madhouse. You're wanted."

"To-night?"

"Yes: I'm sent express for you. You're to come directly."

"Where?"

"At the great house, to be sure."

"Well, I'll come — or at any rate Mr. Postle — "

"No — you must come yourself."

My father groaned in spirit, and shuddered as if suddenly struck to the lungs by the night-air.

"Who is ill?" he asked; "is it Prince George?"

"No — it's the little" — the rest was lost in the sound of the horse's heels as the messenger turned and rode off.

My father closed the casement with a slam that nearly broke the jingling glass; and for some minutes stood ruefully looking from the candle to the bed, and from the bed to the chair with his clothes. But there was no remedy; with his rapidly increasing family he could not afford to slight a patient at the great house. So he plucked off his nightcap, threw it on the floor, and with both hands harrowed and raked at his hair, till every drowsy organ under it was thoroughly wakened up; then he dressed hastily, crept down stairs, wisped a bandana round his throat, struggled into his great-coat, thrust on his worst hat, and, pocketing the door-key, stepped forth into the dark, damp, chill air. He thought he never felt so uncomfortable a night in his life, or encountered worse weather; but he thought a mistake. He had met with inferior qualities by fifty degrees. However there were disagreeables enough, wind and fog, and his road lay for half a mile on the border of a Lincolnshire river, and through a dreary neighborhood, — for out of Holland or Flanders, there was not such another village, so low and flat, with so much water, running and stagnant, in canals and ditches, amidst swampy fields growing the plant cannabis, or hemp — or with so many windmills, and bulrushes, and long rows of stunted willows, relieved here and there by an aspen that seemed shivering with the ague. On he went, yawning and stumbling, past the lock, and over the bridge, and along by the row of low cottages, all as dark as death except one, and that was as dark as death too, in spite of its solitary bright window. For the doctor stopped as he went by to peep in at the narrow panes, and saw one of those sights of misery, that the eye of Providence, a parish doctor, a clergyman occasionally, and a parliamentary commissioner still more rarely, have to look upon. On the bed, if bed it might be called, for it was a mere heap of straw, matting, rushes, and rags, covered by a tattered rug, sat the mother, rocking herself to and fro, over the dead child, wasted to a skeleton,

that was lying stark across her lap. Beside her sat her husband, staring steadfastly, stupid with grief at the flame of the rushlight, his hollow cheeks showing yellow, even by the candle-light, from recent jaundice. Neither moved their lips. On the floor lay an empty vial, with the untasted medicine beside it in a broken teacup; there was a little green rush basket near the mother's feet, with a few faded buttercups — the last toys. My father saw no more, for the light that had been flickering, suddenly went out, and added Darkness to Sorrow and Silence.

In spite of his medical acquaintance with similar scenes of wretchedness, he was shocked at this startling increase of desolation; and for a moment was tempted to step in and offer a few words of consolation to the afflicted couple. But before his hand touched the latch, reflection reminded him from his experience, how inefficacious such verbal comfort had ever been with the poor, except from sympathizers of their own condition. In the emphatic words of one of his pauper patients, "When a poor man or woman, as low down in life as myself, talks to me about heaven above, it sounds as sweet-like as a promise of going back some day to my birthplace, and my father's house, the home of my childhood; but when rich people speak to me of heaven, it sounds like saying, now you 're old and worn out, and sick, and past work, and come to rags, and beggary, and starvation, there 's heaven for you — just as they say to one, at the last pinch of poverty — by way of comforting — there 's the parish."

So my father sighed and walked on: those two wretched, sickly, sorrow-stricken faces, and the dead one, seeming to flash fitfully upon him out of the darkness, as they had appeared and vanished again by the light of the flickering candle. And with this picture of human misery in his mind's eye he arrived at the Great House: and still carrying the dolorous images on his retina, across the marble hall, and up the painted staircase, and through the handsome antechamber, stepped with it, still vivid, into the luxurious drawing-room, that presented a new and very different scene of distress.

On her knees, beside the superb sofa, was the weeping lady of the mansion, bending over the little creature that lay shivering on the chintz cushion, with its arms hugging its own diminutive body, and the knees drawn up to the chest. Its dark

almond-shaped eyes rolled restlessly to and fro: its tiny mouth seemed puckered up by suffering, and its cheeks and forehead were deeply wrinkled, as if by premature old age. The nurse, a young woman, was in attendance, so exhausted by watching that she was dosing on her feet.

As my father advanced into the room, he could distinguish the low moaning of the afflicted lady, intermixed with all those fond doting epithets which a devoted mother lavishes on her sick child. The moment she became aware of his presence she sprang up, with a slight hysterical shriek, and running to meet him, exclaimed,

"O doctor, I am so glad you are come! I have been in agonies! My poor dear darling, Florio, is ill — going — dying!" and she sobbed aloud, and buried her face in her handkerchief.

My father hastily stepped past her, to the sofa, to look at the patient: and at the risk of bursting, suppressed an oath that tingled at the very tip of his tongue. A single glance had filled up the hiatus in the groom's communication — the sufferer was a little Brazilian monkey.

My father's surprise was equal to his disgust, aggravated as it was by a vivid remembrance of the domestic distress he had so recently witnessed through the cottage-window. His head filled with that human bereavement, he had totally forgotten the circumstance that once before he had been summoned to the Great House on a similar errand — to prescribe for a sick lapdog, named after an illustrious personage, at that time very popular, as Prince George. But the whispers of Prudence stifled the promptings of Indignation, reminding him, just in time, that he was a poor country practitioner, the father within the last eight and forty hours of a pair of twins. Accordingly he proceeded with all gravity to feel the pulse and examine the skin of the dwarf animal; laying his hand on the chest to estimate the action of the heart; and even ascertaining, at the expense of a small bite, the state of the tongue.

The weeping lady in the mean time looked on with intense anxiety, uttering incoherent ejaculations, and putting questions with unanswerable rapidity. "O the darling! — my precious pet! — is he hot — is he feverish? My little beauty! — Is n't he very ill? He don't eat, doctor — he don't drink —

he don't sleep — he don't do anything — poor dear! Look how he shivers! Can you — can you — do anything for him — my little love of loves! If he dies I shall go distracted — I know I shall — but you 'll save him — you will, won't you? O do, do, do prescribe — there 's a dear good doctor! What *do* you think of him — my suffering sweet one? — tell me, tell me, pray tell me — let me know the worst — but don't say he 'll die! He'll get over it, won't he — with a strong constitution? — say it 's a strong constitution. O, mercy! look how he twists about! — my own, poor, dear, darling little Flora!"

My father, during this farrago, felt horribly vexed and annoyed, and even looked so in spite of himself: but the contrast was too great between the silent, still, deep sorrow — still waters are deep — for a lost child, and these garrulous lamentations over a sick brute. But the hard, cold, severe expression of his face gradually thawed into a milder one, as the idea dawned upon him of a mode of extracting good out of evil, which he immediately began to put in practice.

"This little animal," — he intended to have said my little patient, but it stuck in his throat — "this little animal has no disease at present, whatever affection may hereafter be established, unless taken in time. It is suffering solely from cold and change of climate. The habitat of the species is the Brazils; and he misses the heat of a tropical sun."

"Of course he does — poor thing!" exclaimed the lady. "But it is not my fault — I thought the Brazils were in France. He shall have a fire in his bedroom."

"It will do no harm, madam," said the Doctor. "But he would derive infinitely more benefit from animal heat — the warmth of the human body."

"He shall sleep with Cradock!" exclaimed the lady, looking towards the drowsy young woman, who bit her lips and pouted: "and mind, Cradock, you cuddle him."

"I should rather recommend, madam," said my father, "a much younger bedfellow. There is something in the natural glow of a young child peculiarly restorative to the elderly or infirm who suffer from a defect of the animal warmth — a fact well-known to the faculty: and some aged persons even are selfish enough to sleep with their grandchildren, on that very account. I say selfish, for the benefit they derive is at the

expense of the juvenile constitution, which suffers in proportion."

"But where is one to get a child for him?" inquired the lady, perfectly willing to sacrifice the health of a human little one to that of her pet brute.

"I think I can manage it, madam," said my father, "amongst my pauper patients with large families. Indeed, I have a little girl in my eye."

"Can she come to-night?" asked the lady.

"I fear not," said my father. "But to-morrow, ma'am, as early as you please."

"Then for to-night, poor dear, he must make shift with Cradock," said the lady, "with a good tropical fire in the room, and heaps of warm blankets."

(Poor Cradock looked hot, at the very thought of it.)

"And about his diet?" asked the lady — "it's heart-breaking to see his appetite is so delicate. He don't eat for days together."

"Perhaps he will eat," said my father, "for monkeys, you know, madam, are very imitative, when the child sets him the example."

"I'll stuff her!" said the lady.

"It can do her no harm," said my father; "on the contrary, good living will tend to keep up her temperature. And as her animal warmth is the desideratum, she must be carefully guarded against any chill."

"I'll clothe her with warm things," said the lady, "from head to foot."

"And make her take exercise, madam," added my father: "exercise in the open air, in fine weather, to promote the circulation of the blood, and a fine glow on the skin."

"Cradock shall play with her in the garden," said the lady; "they shall both have skipping-ropes."

"I can think of nothing else," said my father; "and if such careful treatment and tender nursing will not cure and preserve her, I do not know what will."

"O, it must, it will, it shall cure her, the darling precious!" exclaimed the delighted lady, clapping her jewelled hands. "What a nice clever doctor you are! A hundred, thousand, million thanks! I can never, never, never repay you; but, in the mean time, accept a slight token of my gratitude," and she thrust her purse into my father's hand.

For an instant he hesitated; but, on second thoughts, he pocketed her bounty, and with due thanks took his leave. "After all," he thought, as he stepped through the antechamber, "I am glad I was called in. The monkey may live or die; but, at any rate, poor little Betty Hopkins is provided for one while with a roof over her, and food, and raiment."

The night was finer; the weather, as he stepped into it, was wonderfully improved: at least he thought so, which was the same thing. With a light, brisk step he walked homewards, whistling much above his usual pitch, till he came abreast of the cottage of mourning. There he stopped, and his sibilation sunk into silence, as the three melancholy faces, the yellow, the pale, and the little white one, again flashed on his memory. Then came the faces of his own twin children, but fainter, and soon vanishing. His hand groped wearily for the latch, his thumb stealthily pressed it down; the door was softly pushed a little ajar, and the next instant, something fell inside with a chinking sound on the cottage floor. The door silently closed again, the latch quietly sunk into the catch; and my father set off again, walking twice as fast and whistling thrice as loud as before. A happy man was he, for all his poverty, as he let himself in with the house-key to his own home, and remembered that he had under its roof two living children, instead of one dead one. Quickly, quickly he undressed and got into bed: and, oh! how soundly he slept, and how richly he deserved to sleep so, with that delicious dream that visited him in his slumbers, and gave him a foretaste of the joys of heaven!

CHAPTER V.

A DILEMMA.

THE sun was high in heaven ere my father awoke the next morning, roused from his Elysian dreams by the swallows which first twittered at the eaves above the window, and then, after wheeling round the gable, went skimming along the surface of the glittering river in front of the house: contriving,

temperate creatures though they be, to *moisten their clay* in the passage. The good Doctor sprang from his bed, threw open his casement, and looking cheerfully out in the fresh bright air, began whistling, in his old quiet way, the White Cockade. In the language of the professional bulletins, he had passed a good night: whereas my mother's had been a bad one. On paying his morning visit, he found her weak and languid; her face faded to a dull white, that, with its solid, settled gravity, reminded him of cold suet dumpling.

"Your mistress seems poorly this morning," said my father, addressing himself to Mrs. Prideaux, who had just entered the bedroom, dressed in a morning costume of peculiar neatness.

"I have certainly had the pleasure of seeing your lady look better," answered the nurse, "but she has been watchful, and giving way to mental solicitude."

"Solicitude! — about what?"

"It 's about the christening," said my mother, with a sigh of exhaustion. "I have hardly slept a wink all night for thinking of it — and cannot yet make up my mind."

"As to what?"

"Why, whether we should have two godfathers or four."

"Four godfathers!"

"Yes — four," said my mother. "Kezia says, as there are twins to baptize, there must be a double set of sponsors. And certainly, according to the Book of Common Prayer, she is right. Here it is —" and she pulled the authority from under her pillow — "The Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants, to be used in the Church. *And note, that there shall be for every male child to be baptized two godfathers* and one godmother."

"Humph!" said my father. "The rule seems plain enough. But will not the same pair of sponsors serve over again for the second child?"

"That is the very point," said my mother. "I have been turning it over and over, all night long, till my poor head is in a whirl with it; but am none the nearer. What is your own impression about it?"

"The duties of a godfather are rather serious," said my father, "and if duly fulfilled would be somewhat onerous. But as they are commonly performed, or rather compounded for, by some trifling gift, a spoon, a mug, or a coral —"

"And some godfathers," exclaimed my mother, "neglect even that! There was old Mackworth, who stood for little Tomkins, and rich as he is, never gave his godson so much as a salt-spoon!"

"Such being the case," said my father, putting on his gravest face, "I really think that a couple of able-bodied men might stand sponsors, not merely for two babies, but for a whole regiment of infantry."

"It depends on the canons," said my mother, unconsciously supplying the infantry of my father's equivoque with appropriate artillery.

"On the what?"

"On the canons of the church," said my mother; "and I do wish that in your rounds you would look in on the Curate and obtain his dictum on the subject."

"Perhaps Mrs. Prideaux can enlighten us," said my father, turning towards that lady-like personage, who was hushing my brother on her lap, with a lullaby refined enough to have been of her own composition.

"No, I have asked Mrs. Prideaux," interposed my mother; "but she has never nursed twins before, she says, and therefore cannot furnish a precedent."

"And if the Curate has never baptized twins before," said my father, "he will be in the same predicament."

"Of course he will," said my mother, looking as blank as if the clergyman in question had already declared himself at the supposed nonplus. "I'm quite troubled about it, and have been sleepless all night. It would break my heart to find hereafter that the dear infants had only been half Christianized through any departure from the orthodox rules."

"I 'll tell you what," said my father, starting up from a brief reverie, during which he had assumed his usual air and attitude, at the consideration of an intricate case. I 'll ask Postle."

"Kezia has asked him," said my mother.

"Well?"

"Why, he said that two godfathers are the proper dose for a male child, but whether it ought to be repeated for twins, was more than he could say, and advised a consulting clergyman to be called in."

"Precisely so — it is a clerical case."

"For my part," continued my mother, "I am at my wit's ends about it; for four sponsors, if there must be four, are not to be looked up in a hurry —"

"There's no need of four," exclaimed a voice, and in another moment the face of Kezia became visible between the foot-curtains of the bed, her claret-mark mulled by heat and haste to a rich purple, and the other cheek vying with it in color through triumph and excitement. "There's no need for four! Two godfathers will be enough for both twins; here it is under the Church's own hand;" and she held out an open letter to her mistress.

That invaluable Kezia! At the first hint of the dilemma, from my mother — having previously teased, and tried to unpick the difficulty, in her own mind, she had carried it down stairs, to where all mysteries and doubts were taken for analysis and solution — the surgery. But Mr. Postle, as already stated, was unable to decide the question. In this extremity, it occurred to her that there was a certain channel, through which she might obtain the requisite information: one Mrs. Yardly, whose husband, the parish clerk, would be as competent an authority as to the baptismal ceremonial as the curate himself. The acquaintance, it was true, was a very slight one: but where the good of the family was concerned, the faithful maid of all work was accustomed to get over far more formidable fences. Accordingly she at once composed and despatched a missive, of which the following is a correct copy, to the Amen Corner of our village.

"Dear Maddam, —

"Hopping you will xcuse the Libberty from allmost a purfect Strainger havin but wunce xchanged speach with you in the Surgary, about a Pot of Lennitive Electricity. But our hole Fammily being uncommon anxous respectin the Cristnin of Hinfants. About witch we are all in a Parradox thro havin Twinns. The sweatest, finest thrivingest littel Cherrubs you ever saw. As lick as too pees And a purfect plesure to nus only rayther hoarse and roopy with singin dubblikit lullabis and so much Cradle Him. Not to menshun a xtra sett of Babby linnin to be made at a short notis for the Supper nummery And all the housold wurk besides. But its unpossible to help slavin wuns self to Deth for such a pare of dear luvable littel hinnocents, and I allmost wish I was ded to be a Gardian Angle for their sacks being purfectly misrable wen I think wat Croops and Convulshuns and Blites beset such yung

toothless Buds. And half crazy besides with divided oppinions between Small Pock and Cow Pock witch by report runs sum times into horns and Hoofs. Lord preserve the dear littel Soles from such a trans moggrificashun. But lettin alone Waxynation our present hobject bein to make them Hares of Grace. And as such how menny must stand Sponsers for them at the Fount? The Prayer Book says two god fathers for evvery Mail, but the Pint is wether the same two cannot anser or not for boath. As yet only two have been providid, namely their unkel Mr. Rumbold the Dry Salter and a Mister Sumboddy, a Proxy in Docters Commons. So that if so be Fore Fathers is necessery for Twinns we shall be at a Non Plush. The nus Mrs. Priddo never havin nust Twinns afore cant find a President. And Mister Postle say it is out of his line of practis. But yure Husbund Mister Y bein a clisiasticle Caracter of course knows wat is propper and orther-doxical and an erly Line from ether him or you to that effect would grately obleege and releave all our minds. For as you may supose we are anxous for the dear Hinfants to have a reglar Babe teasing. And shud be shockt arterwards to find they had been skrimpt in their Spirritual rites. Witch is a matter in witch wun would prefer their Babbies to be raythor over then under dun. Bless, bless, their preshus littel harts. With witch I remane dear Maddam

"Yours &c.

"KEZIA JENKS."

The answer to this epistle had just arrived; and after a hasty perusal by Kezia, was thrust open into her mistress's hand.

"Here, take it George," said my mother, "and read it aloud."

My father took the document, and began to read — the owner of the letter lending her ears as intently, as if she learned the sense of the writing for the first time.

"MADAM, —

"In reply to your epistolary favor to my Wife beg to say you are quite wellcome gratis to any experience or information in my Power, parochial, ecclesiastical, or scholastic — Copies of Births, Deaths, or Marriage Certificates excepted, and searching the Register, which is charged for according to time and trouble.

"As regards the Sacrament of Baptism, the quotation from the Prayer Book is ceremoniously correct. Whereby, according to Rule of Three, if one Male Infant require two Godfathers how many will two require? Answer, Four. But in Practise two are

religiously sufficient for twin juveniles. Our fees in any case being the same. Not that the Church object to the full sponsorial complement if parental parties think proper to indulge in the same; whether for the sake of a greater Shew, or with a view to the multiplication of customary Presents. Exempli Gratia, Mrs. Fordige with the extraordinary number of Four Twin Sons at a Birth, who were named after the Holy Evangelists, videlicet, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, when it was thought proper to have the full number of Godfathers, $4 \times 2 = 8$, and which I well remember walking up the aisle two and two, with Nosegays, like the team of a Stage Waggon. As was considered an interesting spectacle, especially by the Female part of the congregation. And profitable, besides, to parents, the eight Godfathers having agreed amongst themselves, and the four Godmothers likewise — Sum Total, twelve — to present Plate of the same pattern.

"In conclusion, my matrimonial Partner desires her compliments, and trusts to be excused answering the domestic details in your Letter for the present, hoping shortly to enjoy the pleasure of a Call, and to enter into the dear little innocents in person.

"I am, Madam,

"Your very humble Servant,

"REUBEN YARDLEY, P. C."

"There!" said my father, returning the letter to Kezia; and then gayly addressing mother, "our perplexities are at an end! We may drive our christening coach with a pair of godfathers, or four in hand, at our own option. For which do you vote?"

"O, for only a pair, of course," replied my mother. "The four would be so hard to collect," she added in a tone which showed that she lamented the difficulty. She was proud of her twins, and would have liked to have seen them attended up the church aisle by a double set of sponsors, walking two and two, with nosegays, and forming, as the learned clerk said, an interesting spectacle to the female spectators. For a minute or so, closing her eyes, she had even enjoyed, in a day-dream, a sort of rehearsal of such a procession: but there were too many obstacles in the way of its realization; and she reluctantly gave up the scheme.

"That's settled then!" exclaimed my father, rubbing his hands together in a most high and palmy state of satisfaction.

"Not quite," said my other parent; who from stewing had only subsided into a simmering. "There's the godmother. I

have gone through every female name in the place, without hitting on anybody likely to undertake the office."

"Phoo, phoo, it's a mere form."

"I beg your pardon," said my mother, rather hastily. "Some persons think it a very responsible office, and refuse to be godmothers at all on that account. Others, again, profess a deep sense of its duties, and insist on acting up to the character."

"And is there any harm in that?" asked my father.

"There might be a world of trouble and annoyance in it," said my mother. "There's Mrs. Pritchard, whom I sounded on the subject, when she called yesterday. 'I'm agreeable to stand,' said she, 'if I'm asked, but, mind, I shall stand on conscientious grounds. I'm not going to be a nominal godmother, like some people: — not a mere automaton, or a figure in wax-work. If I become one of their religious sureties, I'll act up to it, and do my duty as regards their spiritual bringing up;' which is all very well, but might be made a pretext, you know, for interfering in the children's education, and everything."

"No doubt of it," said my father. "And from the perseverance with which Mrs. Pritchard meddles in the temporal concerns of her neighbors, she would unquestionably be a rank nuisance where she had any pretence for busying herself with their spiritual ones. But there's Mrs. Hewley."

"She's in favor of Adult Baptism," replied my mother.

"Or Mrs. Trent?"

"She's for total immersion, or dipping in running streams."

"Mrs. Cobley, then?"

"Why, she's a Papist!"

Poor Kezia! Her variegated York and Lancaster face had undergone, during the discussion, a dozen changes — from red and white to all red, and then back again, — her lips twitching, her brows knitting, her eyes twinkling and moistening. What would she not have give to have been in a station that would have entitled her to volunteer the godmothering of those evangelical twin babes — to have undertaken the care of their precious little souls, as well as of their dear little bodies! — to have stood for them at the font, as well as at the fire, the dresser, the tub, and the ironing-board — slaving for their spiritual welfare as well as their temporal comfort! How heartily she would have pledged herself to teach them the

Creed and the Commandments, and the Catechism, in the vulgar tongue, and "all that a Christian ought to know," if she learned some branches of education herself for the purpose! But she had, alas! no chance of enjoying such drudgery.

"There 's Mrs. Spencer," suggested my father.

"She 's confined," said my mother.

"Well, well," said my father, smiling, "if it comes to the worst, there 's the pew-opener."

"The Lord forbid!" exclaimed Kezia, lifting up her hands and her eyes at the proposition. "What, Mrs. Pegge! Why, she stands for all the naturalized children in the parish."

"As mine are, I hope," said my father, with due gravity.

Kezia turned indignantly away; she felt sure that her master must be joking, but the subject was too serious for such treatment. What, — those beautiful twin babes — both in one cradle — both on one pillow — both under one blanket! "Bless them," she ejaculated aloud, "bless them, bless them, the dear little cherubims — I 've boiled their tops and bottoms!"

The last announcement was aimed at the nurse, but it evidently hit my father also, and in some ticklesome place, for he rubbed his nose as smartly as if a fly had settled on it, and then setting up his whisper of a whistle, stepped briskly out of the bedchamber and down the stairs into the surgery. Why he stopped his music, to laugh out at about the middle of the flight, was known only to himself.

CHAPTER VI.

CATECHISM JACK.

My father was the parish doctor; and when he entered the surgery, Mr. Postle was making up a parish prescription. A poor, shabbily-dressed woman was waiting for the medicine, and a tall, foolish-looking lad was waiting for the poor woman. She was a widow, as it is called, without encumbrance, and had a cottage and some small means of her own, which she eked

out, with the stipend allowed to her by the overseers for taking charge of some infirm or imbecile pauper. The half-witted boy was her present ward.

"It's for Jacobs," said the woman, as my father glanced over the shoulder of his assistant at the prescription. "He gets wus and wus."

"Of course he does," said my father; "and will, whilst he takes those opium pills."

"So I tell him," said the woman; "with his ague, and in a flat, marshy country like this, with water enough about to give any one the hydraulics."

"Hydroptics."

"Well — droptics. You want stimulusses, says I, and not nar—nar—cis — "

"Narcotics."

"Well — cotics. But the poor people all take it. If it's their last penny, it goes for a pennorth of opie, as they call it, at Doctor Shackle's."

"I wonder he sells it," said my father.

"And asking your pardon, doctor," said the woman, "I wonder you don't. They say he makes a mint of money by it."

"Never!" said my father, with unusual emphasis, — "never, if I want a shilling."

"Talking of money," said the woman, "there's a report about goolden guineas, chucked last night by nobody knows who — for it was done in the dark — into the Hobbes's cottage. They have just lost their only child, you know."

The assistant suddenly checked the pestle with which he was pounding, and looked inquisitively at his principal, who fixed his eyes on the idiot boy.

"Well, my lad, and who are you?" inquired my father. "What's your name?"

"M. or N.," answered the boy, slowly dragging the wet forefinger, which he had withdrawn from his mouth, with a long snail-like trail along the counter.

"Fiddlesticks," exclaimed the woman, giving her charge a good shaking by the shoulder. "You've got another name besides that."

"Yes," drawled the boy, "some call me Catechism Jack."

"Ah! — that's an odd name!" said my father. "Who gave it you?"

"My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism," said Jack.

"No such thing, sir," said the woman; "it was the idle boys of the village, because he was always repeating on it; and, indeed, poor fellow, he can repeat nothing else."

"Then how did he get that?"

"Why you see, sir," said the woman, "between ourselves it was all along of his godmother."

"Ah!—indeed!" exclaimed my father, pricking up his ears at such an appendix to the recent discussion in the bedroom. "His godmother, eh?"

"Yes, Mrs. Tozer as was, for she's dead now, as well as his own mother; and that's how he came into my care. His mother went first, while he was in petticoats, and so Mrs. Tozer took charge of him, and sent him to the infant day-school. She was a very strict woman in her religious principles, and so was the schoolmistress; and both made it a great pint for the children to be taught accordingly, which they was. Well, one day there they were, all in the schoolroom up one pair, and little Jack amongst the rest, the last of the row, a-setting on the very end of a long form close to the open door. Well, by and by the children were all called up to say Catechism; so up they all got at once, except Jack, who had been playing instead of getting his task by rote, which made him backwarder to rise than the rest,—when, lo! and behold! up tilts the form, like a rearing horse, and pitches Jack, heels over head, through the door and down the whole stone flight, where he was picked up at the bottom perfectly unsensible."

"Ah!—with a concussion of the brain," said my father.

"A contusion of the occiput," added Mr. Postle; "the spinal vertebræ excoriated, of course, and bruises on both patellæ."

"I don't know about that," said the woman, "but he had a lump on the back of his head as big as an egg; the nubbles of his back were rubbed raw, and his two kneepans were as black as a coal. It was thought, too, that his intellex were shook up into a muddle."

"No doubt of it," said my father.

"Well, to go on with Jack. At long and at last he came to, sore enough and smarting, as you may suppose, for he had been carried home to his godmother, and she had rubbed his

wounds with sperrits and salt, which had got into the cuts. And now, Jack, says she, mark my words, and let them be a warning. It's a judgment of God upon you, says she, for not knowing your Catechism; for if so be you had got it by heart, you would have riz with the rest, and then all this would never have happened. But it's a judgment upon you, says she, and the schoolmistress said the same thing; till between both the poor thing was so scared, he set to work, he did, at his Catechism, and never rested, day or night, till he had got it by heart, as he has now, so thoroughly, you may dodge him, any how, backward or forward, and he won't miss a syllable. And that's how he come by it, sir, as well as the nickname: for except Catechism, which his head is too full of, I suppose, to hold anything else, he don't know a thing in the world."

"Poor fellow!" said my father, opening one of the surgery drawers. "Here, Jack, will you have a lozenge?"

"Yes, verily, and by God's help, so I will. And I heartily thank —"

"There, there, hush! go along with you," said the woman, giving her *protégé* a push towards the outer door, and then, taking up the medicine, with a nod of acknowledgment to Mr. Postle, and a courtsey to my father, she departed, her forlorn charge clinging to her garments, and muttering scraps of that formula which had procured for him the *sobriquet* of Catechism Jack.

CHAPTER VII.

A PATIENT.

"Poor creature!" muttered my father, carefully fishing a drowning fly out of the inkstand with the feather end of a pen, and then laying the draggled insect to dry itself on the blotting-paper; "poor, harmless, helpless creature!"

The assistant stopped his pounding, and looked inquisitively, first at the speaker and then at the supposed object of his sympathy.

"I wonder," continued my father, still talking to himself, "if he would like to carry out the medicine?"

Mr. Postle hastily resumed his mortar-practice, with an interjectional "Oh!"

"Job is gone, I suppose?"

Mr. Postle pounded like mad.

"Job is gone, is n't he?" repeated my father.

"Yes, with the best livery."

"In that case," said my father, heedless of the best blue and drab, "we shall want another boy. And I am thinking, Postle, that yonder half-witted fellow might, perhaps, carry the basket as well as another."

"What, the Catechism chap? Why, he 's an idiot!"

"Or nearly so," said my father; "and, as such, shut out from the majority of the occupations by which lads of his rank in life obtain a livelihood. The greater the obligation, therefore, to prefer him to one of the few employments adapted to his twilight intelligence."

"What — to carry out the physic?"

"And why not?"

"Nothing," said Mr. Postle, but plying the pestle as if he would have pounded the mortar itself into a powder, "nothing at all. Only when an idiot carries out the physic, it 's time to have a lunatic to make it up."

"Phoo! phoo!" said my father, "the boy has arms and legs, and quite headpiece enough for such simple work. At a verbal message, no doubt, he would blunder."

"Yes — would n't he?" said Mr. Postle. "Take of compliments and Catechism, each a dram, mix — shake well up — and administer."

"Like enough," said my father, "if one intrusted any verbal directions to his memory. But he goes on parish errands, and knows every house in the place; and might surely deliver a written label at the right door, as well as a printed notice."

"I wish," said Mr. Postle, gloomily, "there may be any to deliver. Our drugs *are* drugs! We hardly do a powder a day. The business is in a rapid decline, and in another month won't be worth a pinch of magnesia. There 's the Great House gone already — and next we shall lose the parish."

"How! — the Great House!" exclaimed my father, with

more anxiety and alarm than he had betrayed before about his simious patient. "Is the monkey dead, then?"

"Yes — of bronchitis."

"Poor child!" ejaculated my father.

"I should like to open him," said Mr. Postle.

"I hoped she was provided for," said my father, with a sigh.

"If you mean little Betty," said the assistant, "it is no loss to her, — at least to judge by Mother Hopkins's language."

"Why, what does she say?" asked my father, with a tone and look of unmitigated surprise.

"Only all that is bitter and acid. The ungrateful old hag! I should like to stop her mouth with a pitch-plaster!"

"Hush, hush!" whispered my father; and Postle did hush, for, confirming an old proverb, Mother Hopkins herself hobbled into the surgery, with foul weather on her face. Her lips were compressed — there was a red angry spot in the middle of each sallow cheek, and anger glimmered in her dark black eye, like a spark in a tinder-box. She spoke harshly, and abruptly.

"I 'm come to return the bottles."

"Very good!" said my father, receiving vial after vial from the cankered woman, with as much courtesy and humility as if he had been honored and obliged by her custom. "I hope the medicine has done you good. How is your lameness?"

"As bad as ever."

"I am sorry to hear it," said my father; "but your complaint is chronic, and requires time for its treatment. By and by we shall see an amendment."

"We shall see no such thing," said the Shrew. "I arn't going to take any more physic."

"No!"

"No. It 's good for nothing, or you would n't give it away gratis."

My father's face flushed slightly — as whose would not? — with so much physic thrown into it, though but metaphorically — all the draughts and embrocations he had supplied her with for the last six months! But the angry hue passed away long ere one could have washed off a splash of rose-water. It was hard for him to be long angry with any one, — impossible,

with a decrepit woman, so poor, so sickly, and so ragged. One glance at her cooled the transient heat in an instant. As to speaking harshly to so much wretchedness, he would as soon have poured vitriol on her tatters. His words were still kind, his voice cordial, his smile genial.

"Well! and how is little Betty?"

"Little Betty 's at home," replied the woman, with a short, sharp twang in her tone that showed the very chord most out of tune had been struck upon. "She might have been at the Great House; — but, thank God, she is n't. She 's not an animal!"

"You mean a beast!" suggested my father.

"I say she 's not an animal, — nor shan't sleep with one. And a monkey, too — a nasty, filthy, basilicon monkey!"

"Brazilian," muttered my father — "Brazilian."

"Well, Brazilian — an ugly, foreign, outlandish varment!"

"Ah," exclaimed my father, "there 's the prejudice! If the creature had been a little dog, now, or a kitten, or a squirrel, you would never have objected to it."

"Squirrels and kittens be hanged!" cried the old woman, waxing in wrath. "It an't the sort of creature — it an't the species; but the detriment to the juvenile constitution. A doctor might know better the vally of the natural warmth of the human body than to have it extracted by a brute beast."

My father was dumbfounded. The charge was so plausible, and couched in such set phrase, that he did not know what to think of it; but appealed, by a perplexed look, to his assistant.

"Prompted — put up to it," muttered Mr. Postle, in a characteristic *aside*. He had turned his back to the counter, and was apparently reading aloud the label on one of the drawers. The woman, in the mean time, thrust the last vial into the Doctor's hand as hastily as if it burnt her fingers.

"That 's all the bottles," she said; "and there," throwing a paper bag on the counter — "there 's the corks."

O Ingratitude! — marble-hearted fiend! — how hadst thou possessed that thankless woman with a demon, fit only, like those of old, to inhabit a swine. Weekly, daily, recalling the better times she had known, she had bemoaned her inability to fee a physician, or pay an apothecary; daily, almost hourly, she had lamented the delicate constitution of her little Betty,

and the impossibility of furnishing her with a better bed, more generous diet, and warmer garments, — wants for which, by will and deed, her benefactor had endeavored to provide; and to throw, in his very teeth, all his charitable unguents, lotions, composing draughts, and tonic mixtures, bottles and corks included, and then, in return, to pour on his benevolent head the full vials of her wrath, bitter as the waters of Marah, and corrosive as aqua fortis! It might have moved a saint! But there was in my father's nature so much of the milk of human kindness, and in that milk such a sweet butterish principle, that stirring his temper the wrong way seemed merely to oil it. Thus, when he responded again to the querulous ingrate, it was as the music of an Æolian harp in the parlor-window to a hurdy-gurdy at the area rails.

"Well, well, — we need not quarrel, Mrs. Hopkins. The monkey is dead, and so there is no harm done. I meant all for the best, and hoped to do you a service. Little Betty would have been comfortably lodged, and well fed, and was to be warmly clothed from head to foot."

"Thank ye for nothing!" retorted the snappish one. "I can clothe little Betty myself: and when she famishes for victuals and drink, and not afore, she shall sleep with apes, baboons, and orange outangs."

"Orang," said my father, *sotto voce* — "o—rang."

"Well — horang. I should like to see your own twins, I should, with a great Wild Man of the Woods in their cradle!"

My father's lips moved to reply; but before he could utter a syllable he was forestalled by a noise like the groan of execration which is sometimes heard at a public meeting. All eyes turned in the direction of the sound; and lo! there stood Kezia, her mouth still open and round as that of a cannon, her eyes staring, her cheeks both of a crimson, her arms uplifted, and her hands clenched, with utter indignation. One of her many errands to the surgery had brought her just in time to overhear the atrocious wish that converted her, *pro tempore*, into a she-dragon. In another moment she confronted the cantankerous Mrs. Hopkins, who assumed an attitude of defiance, and plainly showed that if the flesh was weak the spirit was willing enough for the encounter. My father would fain

have interfered, but was entreated, by signs and in a whisper, by Postle, not to "check the effervescence."

But the combatants shall have a chapter to themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ALTERCATION.

THOSE two angry females — just imagine them, ripe for their verbal duel! — Mrs. Hopkins fierce, resolute, and pale as the mask in marble of an ancient Fury; Kezia, with her homely person, coarse limbs, scrubby head, staring eyes, and that violent red blotch on her cheek, not unlike the ill-painted figure-head of the Bellona, or some such termagant ship of war.

"O you wretch!" began Kezia, panting for utterance.

"Wretch yourself!" returned the woman. "Who gave you leave to meddle?"

"Those babes — those blessed babes!" exclaimed Kezia; "to want them devoured in their innocent cradle by a wild man of the woods! Babes only fit to devour with kisses — and such as would soften any heart but a stone one, that nothing will touch, except the fizzling stuff as cleans marble!"

"Say, muriatic acid," suggested Mr. Postle.

"Twin babes, too!" continued Kezia, "the very pictures of heavenly innocence — and might sit to a painter for a pair of Cherubims! — and to abuse them so — it 's almost blasphemy — it 's next to irreligious!"

"Heyday!" exclaimed Mrs. Hopkins; "here 's a fuss, indeed, about babies! — As if there was no more of them in the world! Prize ones, no doubt. I should like to see them soaped and scrambled for!"

"You would!" cried Kezia, almost in a scream; "you would! O you wicked, wicked monster!"

"Monsters are for caravans," said the woman; "and if I was you, before I talked of monsters, I would go to some quack doctor," — and she glanced viciously at my father — "for a cosmetical wash, to make both my cheeks of a color."

"My cheeks are as God made them," said Kezia; "so it's Providence's face that you're flying into, and not mine. But I don't mind personals. It's your cruel ill-wishing to those precious infants; and which to look at would convert a she-ogress into a maternal character. Do you call yourself a mother?"

"Do *you*?" asked the woman, with a spiteful significance.

"No I don't," answered Kezia, "and not fit I should. I'm a single spinster, I know, and therefore not a mothery character; but I may stand up, I hope, without committing matrimony, for two helpless innocent babes. Dear little infants, too, as I've washed and worked for and fed with my own hands; and nussed on my own lap; and lulled on my own buzzum; and as such I don't mind saying, whomever attacks them, I'm a lioness with her yelps."

"Whelps, Kizzy, whelps;" but Kizzy was too angry to notice the correction.

"A rampant lioness, sure enough! And if I was your keeper," said Mrs. Hopkins, with a malicious glance at my father, "I'd keep you to your own den. The business has n't improved so much, I believe, as to require another assistant."

The wrath of Kezia was at its climax. Next to an attack on the family, a sneer at the business was a sure provocative. "I know my place," she said, "and my provinces. It's the kitchen, and the back-kitchen, and the washus, and the nursery; and if I did come into the surgery, it was to beg a little lunatic caustic to burn off a wart. As for our practice, Mr. Postle must answer for himself. All I know is, he can hardly get his meals for making up the prescriptions; what with mixing draughts, and rolling pills and boluses, and spreading blisters and Bergamy pitch plasters, and pounding up drugs into improbable powders."

"Impalpable," said my father.

"Well, impalpable. Not to name the operations, such as cupping, and flea botany, and distracting decayed teeth."

"*Ex*tracting," said my father, "the other would be a work of supererogation."

"Well, extracting — and the vaccinating besides, — and all the visiting on horseback and on foot, — private and parishional, — including the workus. Then there's Master himself," continued Kezia, dropping a sort of half courtesy to

him, as an apology for the liberty of the reference, — "if he gets two nights' rest in a week, it 's as much as he does, what with confinements, and nocturnal attacks, and sudden accidents, — it 's enough to wear out the Night Bell! There was this very morning, between one and two, he was called up out of his warm bed, to the Wheel of Fortune, to sow up a juggler."

"Jugular," said my father.

"Well, jugular. And the night before, routed out of his first sleep by a fractious rib. I only wonder we don't advertise in the papers for a partner, for there 's work enough for a firm. First there 's a put-out shoulder to be put in again, — then a broken limb to set, — and next a cracked penny cranium to be japanned — "

She meant trepanned, and the correction was on my father's lips, but was smothered in the utterance by the vehement Mrs. Hopkins. "Japan a fiddlestick!" she cried, impatiently rolling her head from side to side, and waving her hands about, as if battling with a swarm of imaginary gadflies. "What do I care for all this medical rigmarole?"

"O, of course not!" said Kezia, "not a brass button. Only when people affront our practice, and insinuate that we have a failing business, it 's time to prove the reverse. But perhaps you 're incredible. There was no such thing, I suppose, as the pisoned charity-boy, with his head as big as two, and his eyes a squeezing out of it, because of eating a large red toadstool, like a music-stool, in loo of a mushroom."

"There might, and there might not," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"I thought as much!" exclaimed Kezia, "and in course you never heard of the drowned female who was dragged out of the canal, a perfect sop! and was shocked into life again, by our galvanic battering?"

"I never did," replied Mrs. Hopkins.

"O no — not you!" said Kezia, bitterly. "Nor the stabbed Irishman, as was carried into this very surgery, all in a gore of blood, and pale, and fainting away, and in a very doubtful state indeed, till Master applied a skeptic."

"A styptic," said my father, "a styptic."

"Well, a styptic. And may be you 've not heard neither of the scalded child — from pulling a kettle of boiling water over her poor face and neck, — and which was basted with

sweet oil, and drudged with flour, and was so lucky as to heal up without leaving a cockatrice."

"If I was you," said Mrs. Hopkins, "I would say a cicatrix."

"Well, perhaps I ought," said Kezia. "Howsomever there was n't a scar or a seam on her skin, — so that 's a cure at any rate. Then there 's the Squire. — But, maybe, nobody has seen his groom come galloping, like life or death, to fetch Master to a consulting of the faculty — no, nor the messenger from the Rectory — nor the Curate himself dropping in here for medical advice, — quite out of sorts, he said, and as hoarse as a raven with a guitar."

"A catarrh," said my father, "a catarrh!"

"Well, catarrh — and could n't swallow for an enlarged tonsor in his throat."

It is uncertain how much further Kezia might have "carried on the business," and improved it, but for an importunate voice which began calling in a stage whisper for Mrs. H. Mrs. Hopkins looked towards the road, where a shadow had for some time been fluttering on the threshold, whilst part of the skirt of a female garment dodged about the door-post, and a bobbing head now and then intercepted the sunshine, and uttered its subdued summons. But as Mrs. H. did not seem inclined to obey the call, the Unknown stepped or rather stumbled, into the surgery, for she was purblind from a complaint in her eyes, and therefore wore a green shade, so deep that it shadowed her crimson nose, like a penthouse over a pet carnation. The two females were obviously confederates, for the new-comer took up a position beside her predecessor, with a determined air and attitude which showed that the broadside of the Tartar would be supported by a volley from the Vixen. Kezia, who would have engaged a fleet of shrews in the same cause, maintained as bold a front, and there wanted but the first shot to bring on a general action, when my father interposed, and suspended hostilities by a friendly salute.

"Glad to see you, Mrs. Pegge."

"That 's as may turn out," replied Mrs. Pegge, throwing back her head, with her chin up in the air, and looking along her nose, at the Doctor, in a posture, as it seemed, of the most ineffable disdain.

"Your sight must be better at any rate," said my father, "to let you come out so far without a guide."

"Well, it is better," said Mrs. Pegge; and then turning as on a pivot to her ally, "No thanks to nobody, eh, Mrs. H.?"

"Certainly not," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"I did n't follow the Doctor's directions, — did I, Mrs. H.?"

"Certainly not."

"And should have been no better if I had — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"Not a tittle," said Mrs. Hopkins, "but quite the reverse."

"It is n't the hopthalmy at all, — is it, Mrs. H.?"

"By no manner of means."

"Nor gutty sereny — it don't come from the stomach — do it, Mrs. H.?"

"Not in the least."

"I never said that it did," put in my father, more tickled than hurt by the attack on his medical skill.

"Of course not," said Mrs. Pegge; "you 'd have been wrong if you had, — for it 's Amor Rosis — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"Exactly so — the very name," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"I can guess where they got that," muttered Mr. Postle, just loud enough to be heard by his principal; but my father was in too good a humor, and rubbing his nose too briskly to be accessible to sinister suspicions.

"Well, well," he said, with a tone and smile of conciliation enough to have smoothed a pair of ruffles into Quakerly wristbands. "Amor, in the eye, is a very common affection amongst females, and so you may be right. And in spite of all that has passed, should you or Mrs. Hopkins wish at any time for medical advice or medicaments — "

"O no, no, no!" exclaimed Mrs. Pegge, tossing her head like a horse at the hay-rack. "We are poor, — but we won't be experimented on any longer — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"The Lord forbid!" cried Mrs. H. "We 've been too much experimented upon already!"

"Perhaps," said Mr. Postle, determined to test his secret suspicions, "you had better seek other advice."

"Eh, what?" asked Mrs. Pegge, wheeling about with her green verandah, till she brought her red ferret-like eyes

to bear on the assistant. "What might you say, young man?"

"I said, that perhaps you had better seek other advice."

"Perhaps *we have*," replied Mrs. Pegge, with a suppressed chuckle, and the usual appeal for confirmation to Mrs. H.

"We certainly did," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"And whatever was advised," said Mrs. Pegge, "there was one thing not recommended, namely, for a young child to sleep in an apiary — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"If you mean with a monkey," said Mrs. Hopkins, "most decidedly not."

"O no," said Mrs. Pegge, "Doctor Shackle knows better than that — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"I said so!" exclaimed Mr. Postle, with a slap of his hand on the desk that would have crushed a beetle into a dead flat.

"Hush, hush," whispered my father. "Dear me, you have killed the poor inky fly!"

"Curse the fly!" cried Mr. Postle, fairly beside himself with vexation. "I wish they had both been in its skin, — a couple of ungrateful old Jezebels!"

"He! he! he!" tittered Mrs. Pegge. "Some people will want one of their own cooling draughts!"

"Why you ungrateful creature!" cried Kezia, whose face had been purpling and swelling with indignation, till it seemed ready to burst like an over-ripe gooseberry. "I wonder you can name a 'fervescing draught, for fear of its flying in your face!"

"Hoity toity!" said Mrs. Pegge, turning on Kezia, with her green shade over her glistening red eyes, like an angry Hooded Snake. "What have we here? — A Hen Doctor — a 'pothecary in petticoats?"

"I don't mind names," answered Kezia, "so you may be as scrofulous as you please."

"Scurrilous," said my father.

"Well, scurrilous. I don't mind that," continued Kezia. "It's your base return for our pharmacy, and your sneers at our practice. Such shocking unthankfulness! And to think of all the good physic you have enjoyed gratis!"

"Physic!" retorted Mrs. Pegge, with a sneer of unutterable contempt. "Physic, indeed! such physic! If it's so good, why don't you enjoy it yourself? I'm sure we don't want to

rob you of it. If it was worth anything it would n't be given away — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"My own words," replied Mrs. Hopkins, "to a syllable."

"It 's not physic at all!" said Mrs. Pegge.

"No!" exclaimed my father: "what then?"

"It 's the grouts of other people's," said Mrs. Pegge, "and that 's how we get it in charity. But come, Mrs. H., we have been long enough here."

"Quite," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"And it will be long enough before we come here again, — eh, Mrs. H.?"

"Ages," said Mrs. Hopkins; and drawing the arm of her purblind confederate under her own, she led her towards the door, through which — the one stumbling and the other limping — the two ingrates groped and hobbled away, and were seen no more.

"Say I told you so!" exclaimed Mr. Postle, desperately snatching up the pestle, but grinding nothing, except some inarticulate execrations between his teeth. My father even looked a little grave; and as for Kezia, she could only stare up at the ceiling, flap her hands about, and ejaculate, "O, I never!"

"Yes, Shackle 's at the bottom of it all," muttered Mr. Postle, shrewdly adopting my father's own mode of thinking aloud as a vehicle for administering his private sentiments. "Those two beldams have been prompted by him, that 's certain — and he has been called in at the Great House."

"He has?" said my father.

Postle, however, took no notice of the interrogation, but shook his head despondingly, and proceeded. "That infernal little monkey has done for us! We shall never be sent for again, master or mate. No, no, a doctor who could n't save such a little creature would never preserve so great a lady! So there is our best patient gone — gone — gone! And the Parish will go next, for Shackle has got the Board by the ear."

"Not he," said my father.

"Then he sells opium, and we don't, and that gives him the village. The more fools we;" and Postle shrugged his shoulders and elevated his eyebrows. "We 're unpopular with rich and poor. I should not wonder, some day, if we were even to be hung or burnt in effigy!"

My father smiled, and rubbed his nose, and none the less that Kezia clasped her hands and groaned aloud at the imaginary picture. But he repented of his mirth, when he saw her eyes swimming in tears, fixed alternately on himself and the assistant, as if they were already swinging like Guys over the opprobrious bonfire.

"Postle — Mr. Postle," he began; but the assistant continued his soliloquy.

"There 's Widow Warner's child in one of her old convulsions — "

"Poor thing!" cried my father, "I will go and look to her directly!"

"But there has been no message," said Mr. Postle, suddenly waking up from his pretended fit of abstraction. "We 're not sent for."

"No matter," said my father; and snatching up his hat, and clapping it on the wrong side before, was about to hurry out of the surgery, when he was choked by an exclamation from Kezia.

"Gracious! The yellow lamp is broke again!"

"Yes — last night — for the fifth time," said Mr. Postle.

"It is very strange," said my father, looking up at the gap in the fanlight, where there ought to have been a glass globe, filled with a certain yellow fluid; and which nightly, by the help of a lamp behind it, cast a flaring advertisement over a post, across the road, and partly up a poplar-tree on the opposite side of the way. "It is very strange — there must be some cause for it."

"Nobody breaks Shackle's green lamp," observed Mr. Postle.

My father made no reply; but, stepping hastily out of the surgery, set off — at what Postle called his acute pace, in opposition to his slower, or chronic one — towards the Widow Warner's Cottage.

CHAPTER IX.

OUR CARVER.

AMONGST my father's little vanities — and in him it was partly professional — he rather piqued himself on his dexterity in dividing a fowl or cutting up a joint of meat. The performance, nevertheless, was generally a slovenly one, — not for want of skill in the operator, but through the fault of the carver, which was as blunt as any *messer* in Germany.

Every family has some standing nuisance of the kind, — a smoky chimney, a creaking door, a bad lock, a stiff hinge, or a wayward clock, which, in spite of a thousand threats and promises, never gets Rumfordized, oiled, mended, eased, rectified, or regulated. Our stock grievance was the carver. In vain Kezia, who never grudged what she called elbow-grease, rubbed the steel to and fro, and round and round, and labored by the hour to sharpen the obstinate instrument; wherever the fault lay, in her manipulation, the metal, the knife-board, or the Flanders brick, the thing remained as dull as ever. My father daily hacked and haggled, looked at the edge, then at the back of the blade, and passed his finger along both, as if in doubt which was which, — pshawed — blessed his soul — wondered who could cut with such a thing — and swore, for the hundredth time, that the carver must and should go to the cutler's. Perhaps, as he said this so positively, it was expected that the carver would go of itself to the grindstone: however, it never went; but Kezia and the knife rubbed on till the board and the brick, and my father's patience were nearly worn out together. The dinner-tool was still as blunt as a spade; and might have remained so till Doomsday, but for the extraordinary preparations for the Christening, when, every other household article having undergone a furbishing, the eye of our maid-of-all-work fell on the refractory knife, which she declared — please the pigs — should go forthwith to be set and ground by Mr. Weldon the smith.

Luckily there was an errand due in the same direction; so huddling herself into her drab shawl, and flinging on her black bonnet, without tying the strings — for there was no time for

nicety — away went Kezia through the village at her best pace, — a yellow earthenware basin in one hand, and the naked carving-knife in the other; a combination, be it said, ratherly butcherly, and to a country-bred mind inevitably suggestive of pig-sticking, and catching the blood for black puddings: but the plain, homely Kezia, who seldom studied appearances, or an ideal picture of her own person, held sturdily on her way, with striding legs and swinging arms, the domestic weapon flashing to the sunshine in her red right hand. How her thoughts were occupied, may be guessed, — that the usual speculations of menials had no place in her brain. Instead of thinking of sweethearts, fairings, ribbons, new bonnets, cast-off gowns, tea and sugar, the kitchen stuff, vails, perquisites, windfalls, petty peculations, warnings, raised wages, and what did or did not belong to her place, her mind was busy with the Baptism, the dear babes, Mrs. Prideaux, her master, mistress, and Mr. Postle, and generally all those household interests in which her own were as completely merged and lost as water is in water. Amongst these the medical interest of course held a prominent place and induced in her, not only a particular attention to the practice and the patients, but a general observance — which became habitual — of looks and symptoms, with a strong tendency, moreover, to exhibit what she called her physical knowledge. This propensity she was enabled to indulge in her passage along "the Street," a long straggling row of one-storied cottages, mud-built and thatched, and only separated by the road in front from the sluggish river, which added its unwholesome damps to the noxious effluvia from mouldy furniture, musty garments, and perhaps rancid provisions, and sluttish accumulations of dust and dirt, in dark, ill-ventilated rooms. At the back, dotted with stunted willow-pollards, and windmills, and intersected by broad ditches, lay the Fens, a dreary expanse, flat as a map, and as diversely colored by black and brown bogs, water, purple heath, green moss, and various crops, blue, red, and yellow, including patches of hemp and flax, which at certain seasons were harvested and placed to steep in stagnant ponds, whence the rotting vegetable matter exhaled a pestilential malaria as fetid in its stench as deadly in its influence on the springs of health and life. The eyes of Kezia rested, therefore, on many a sickly, sallow face and emaciated frame amongst the men and

women who lounged or worked beside the open windows, and even in some of the children that played round the thresholds, biting monstrous cantles out of slices of bread and butter, or nursing baby brothers and sisters only half a size smaller than themselves. With all these people, big and little, Kezia exchanged familiar greetings, and nods and smiles of recognition, occasionally halting for a brief conference, — for example, to recommend "scurvy treatment" for little Bratby, to prescribe a dose of "globular salts" for the younger Modley, or to hint to Mrs. Pincott, whose infant was suffering from dentition, that its gums wanted "punctuation" with the lancet. But at one house she paused to deliver an especial salute; for on the door-step sat little Sally Warner, cuddling her arms in her pinafore, and upturning a cheerful chubby face, with a fair brow, bright blue eyes, and rosy cheeks, but sadly disfigured between the snubby nose and dimpled chin, and all round the pretty mouth, by an eruption which might have been averted by a timely dose of brimstone and treacle, — a spectacle Kezia no sooner observed, than, abruptly stopping for an instant with a certain gesture, she pronounced certain ambiguous words, so appalling, in one sense, that the scared child immediately fled indoors to her widowed mother, on whose lap, after a paroxysm of grief and terror, she went off into one of those constitutional fits to which she had been subject from her cradle.

Poor Kezia! How little she dreamt that, by merely pointing at a child with a carving-knife, and saying, "You want opening!" she was seriously endangering a young life! How little she thought that she was preparing for her dear master another of those mortifications which were beginning to throng round him so thickly as to justify the old proverb, that misfortunes never come single, but are gregarious in mischief, and hunt in packs like wolves.

In the mean time my father, good easy man! walked on quite unconscious of the impending annoyance; for the incident of the carving-knife, which furnished this little episode, occurred prior to the scene in the surgery recorded in the last chapter.

CHAPTER X.

THE VISIT; AND THE VISITATION.

A GOOD man, of kindly impulses, and, contented with their gratification, is not apt to resent very violently the ungracious reception of his benefits; but, however indifferent on his own account, he cannot help feeling some vexation, partly for the sake of the ingrate himself, and partly on behalf of mankind in general. There is a wrong done to the species; a slur cast on human nature; and his cheek flushes, if not with personal indignation, with shame for his race. Thus, there are men whom a series of injuries, readily forgiven, have failed to convert into misanthropes; but have inspired, nevertheless, with a profound melancholy.

Something of this depression probably weighed down my father's spirits, seeing that he walked without his usual music, the whisper of a whistle, and looking earthwards besides — as if out of tune for sunshiny thoughts — into his own shadow — heedless alike of the sparrow's taking a dust-bath in the road, and the wagtail that kept just ahead of him by a series of short, swift runs, its delicate legs almost invisible from the rapidity of their motion, and its tail, at every halt, balancing with that peculiar vibration from which the bird derives its name.

And yet the scene was much brighter than when he had last paced the same road: the day was fine, and the landscape as lovely and cheerful as its "capabilities" allowed. The river glittered in the sun; the bleak rose at the flies, making numberless rings and dimples in the surface; and myriads of minnows and stickle-backs — for which the water was famous — wheeled and manœuvred in dark shoals, like liquid clouds, amidst the shallows; while larger fish skulked in the eddies round the lock-gates, or glistened silverly through the intricate golden arabesques that sparkled in the rippled water, and thence reflected, danced on the piles of the dam, and the supports of the Dutch-looking swing-bridge. For a swarm of expatriated Flemings had settled aforetime in the neighborhood; and by the style of such erections had made the country, in its

artificial features, as well as in its natural aspect, very similar to their own.

On the other hand lay the broad ditch; here and there widening into a little pool, that bristled with rushes and flags, amidst patches of brown water, and green scum, and aquatic weeds, enlivened by numerous yellow blossoms, like bathing buttercups, over which the red, blue, or green dragon-flies, all head and tail — like glorified tadpoles — darted about on their gauzy wings; or with a dipping motion, regular as a pulsation, deposited their eggs in the stagnant fluid; or settled, and clung motionless to some reedy stem. In the clear spaces, the water-spider, skating without ice, performed its eccentric evolutions on the surface; whilst clouds of gnats pertinaciously hovered over some favorite spot, though dissipated again and again by the flutter of the fly-bird, hawking at insects, and returning after each short flight to perch on the same dead twig of the alder. The bank was gay with flowering weed, and covered with tangled verdure — plants, shrubby, pyramidal, and pendulous, interlaced and festooned by straggling creepers and parasites, out of which, at intervals, struggled the trunk of the pollard willow, still clasped by the glossy ivy, and embossed with golden or emerald moss — or the silvery stem of the aspen, up-turning at every breath the hoary side of its twinkling leaves, and changing its foliage from green to gray, and from gray to green, with the variable shades of the summer sea. The very slime oozing round the muddy margin of the pool, and filling the holes poached by the feet of horses and cattle, assumed prismatic tints; whilst the fresh plashes, running up into the road-ruts, glanced alternate blue and white with the shifting sky: in short, there was all the beauty that color, change, light and shade, life and motion, can give to even commonplace objects; and on which, generally, my father, a lover of nature, would not have turned a careless eye, no more than he would have let the sedge-bird warble, as unheard as invisible, among the waving reeds.

But his mind was preoccupied. In spite of himself the harsh voice of Mrs. Hopkins still echoed in his ear; he still saw the red and black eyes of Mrs. Pegge glimmering, like live charcoal, under their green shade. With every step, however, the image and the sounds became fainter, and the cloud passed away from his soul.

"Pshaw," he said to himself, "I am as unreasonable as the old women! Poor creatures, that have hardly daily bread enough to justify a thanksgiving — and to expect from them a grace before and after a dose of physic! To be sure they might have been more civil — and yet, poor, ragged, infirm, disappointed in life, and diseased — the one half-blind and the other a cripple — what worldly sugar have they in their cup to sweeten their dispositions? What cream of comfort, or soothing syrup, to make them mild, affable, and good-humored? And besides, what do they meet with themselves from society at large but practical rudeness? Scorned and shunned because penniless and shabby; oppressed, snubbed, and wronged, because weak and powerless; neglected and insulted, because old and ugly; and unceremoniously packed off at last, as no longer ornamental, useful, or profitable, to that human lumber-hole, the workhouse! Accustomed to endure poverty without pity, age without reverence, want without succor, pain without sympathy, — what wonder if their minds get warped with their frames, and as sensitive to slights and affronts as their bodies to damp and cold winds, — if their judgments become as harsh as their voices, or if their tempers sharpen with their features? What wonder if their prejudices stiffen with their limbs — their whims increase with their wrinkles — their repinings with their infirmities — nay, if their very hearts harden with their fates, or their patience fails utterly under the tedious suffering of some chronic disease, which Art can only palliate, whilst Hope perhaps promised a cure? No, no, we must not expect too much from human nature under such trials, and so many privations! — And so let them enjoy their discontents," said my father, raising his voice: "the worse for them, poor souls, that they are past other pleasure! — and if grumbling be a comfort, who would grudge it, any more than their solitary luxury — a pinch of snuff?"

"Or a drop of lodnum," grumbled a surly voice.

My father looked up, and recognized the speaker; but the man, gazing straight before him, as if suddenly seized with a stiff neck, passed hastily by, to escape the words which pursued him.

"Yes, yes, Roger Heap, or a dram of oxalic acid, which I would as soon sell you as the other. It's the curse of the county, what with their laudanum drops — and opie pills —

and syruping the infants — and if ever I saw a flower like a well-frilled last nightcap it 's the White Poppy!"

My father stopped, for he had reached the widow's pretty cottage, and stepping through the open front-door, walked into the parlor. It was a small room, neatly but tastily furnished; for Mrs. Warner had been left in easy circumstances by her late husband, a farmer, in those prosperous war times when farmers reaped golden harvests; and long before the distressed agriculturist learned to cry "*Ichaboe!* My glory is departed from me! and I am dependent for profitable crops on a species of foreign Penguin, of dirty habits!" His competence, indeed, was rapidly growing into a fortune, when he perished suddenly after a market-dinner by an accident which, communicated too abruptly to the widow, made her, prematurely, the mother of an infant, afflicted from its ill-starred birth with convulsions. A black profile of the father hung over the mantelpiece, beside the old-fashioned mirror; and in his vacant elbow-chair, beside the fireplace, reposed his favorite terrier, blind with age, and asthmatic, from the pampering of his mistress, whose whole affections were divided, though in unequal portions, between her little Sally and the dog. At the sound of a strange foot the wheezy animal uttered a creaking growl, but quickly began to thump the damask seat with his tail on recognizing my father, already met, or rather intercepted, by the widow, who, omitting her usual courtesy, placed herself directly before him, so as to bar his passage to the inner room.

"Well, and how is Sally?" asked my father, kindly looking down at the diminutive widow, for she was the smallest woman, to use the popular description, "that ever stood in shoe-leather, not to be an absolute dwarft." Besides which, since Master Warner's death, she had pined and wasted away to a perfect atomy, and looked even less than she really was in that pinched cap and the black dress which reduced her figure. Not that she fretted visibly, or wept: her eyes shed no more tears than those of the peacock plumes over the old mirror; but if grief has a *dry rot* of its own, by that decay she had crumbled away till her whole widowed body, as my father said, contained but just clay enough to make one little lachrymatory urn. In truth, she was singularly withered and shrivelled, and, in the common belief, still shrank so rapidly as to beget a notion amongst the more imaginative of the village

children, that she would eventually dwindle to the fairy standard, and then disappear.

"Well, how is Sally?" asked my father: "I hear she has had a fit."

"She has," answered the tiny widow. Her very voice seemed smaller than usual, and to come, a mere sibilant murmur, through her thin, compressed lips and closed teeth.

"Poor thing! I'll go in and look at her," said my father, making one step sideways, and then another forward.

"There is no need," said the widow, stepping one pace backward, and then another sideways, so as to still keep in his front.

"Is she well, then?"

"No."

"I had better see her, then," said my father.

"Doctor Shackle has seen her," said the widow.

"Quite right — he was the nearest," replied my father, who was as free from the professional as from any other species of jealousy. "Quite right! then I am easy about her — for she is in good hands."

Just as my father pronounced this eulogium the object of it issued from the inner room; and the little widow, stepping apart, left the rival doctors — if there can be rivalry all on one side — standing face to face. What a contrast it was! my father, plump, rosy as a redstreak, and bright-eyed — one of those men of the old school who looked handsome in hair-powder; the other a tall, bony personage, sandy haired, with large yellow whiskers, stony light gray eyes, a straight, sharp nose, high cheekbones, colorless cheeks, and thin lips, parted in a perpetual smile that resulted less from good temper than good teeth — a proper enough personification of Lent, reminding one of the hard, sordid dryness of the stockfish, and the complexion of the parsnip. Then his manners were cold and reserved, his voice uniform in its tone — his words few and sarcastic, and often marked in *italics*, by a sneering curl of the lip — one of those men from whose veins, if pricked, you would expect not blood, but milk — not milk warm and sweet, but acrid like that of the dandelion — men whose livers, you feel sure, are white; their hearts of the palest flesh-color, and always on the wrong side; their brains a stinging jelly, like the sea-nettle. That my father, one of the warmest of the warm-

blooded animals, could endure such a polypus — that they could meet without his instinctively antipathizing and flying off, was proof of his easy disposition, his exquisite temper, his child-like simplicity, large faith in human goodness, and catholic attraction towards all his race.

"Well, Doctor," said my father, "how is the little patient?"

"All safe now," answered Shackle. "But a terrible shock to the system — tremendous fit — brought on by a fright."

"A fright?"

"Yes · some fool or other, with a knife, or magical instrument, or something — threatened to rip her up."

"The brute deserved a flogging!" exclaimed my father.

"I think so too," said Shackle, with a glance aside at the mother.

"Why, the brute, as you call her," began the widow, but was checked by Shackle, who placed his finger on his lip, and, stooping down to her ear, whispered:

"Assumed ignorance!"

"Poor child!" said my father; "I have been quite anxious about her."

"You must have been," said Shackle; "you came so quickly!" — a sarcasm my father, in the innocence of his heart, mistook for a civility.

"It happened hours ago," remarked the little widow.

"Is it possible!" cried my father. "But I knew nothing of it — not a syllable."

Shackle said nothing, but looked incredulously at the widow, who replied, by an almost imperceptible shake of the head.

"Postle only told me," said my father, "about ten minutes since."

"O, that Postle!" exclaimed Shackle, "what a treasure he must be!"

"He is, indeed," said my father, quite unconscious of the intended sneer.

"And that — what's her name? — Kezia?" cried Shackle, "taking such a family interest in everything — even to the medical practice!"

At the mention of Kezia and medical practice, the figure of the little widow appeared to dilate; her eyes flashed, and her tiny tongue began rapidly to moisten her thin lips; but,

before she could speak, Shackle broke in with some directions about the sick child; and then seizing my father by the arm, hurried him out of the cottage. "I have another case to attend," he said, "and a very urgent one."

"I hope the present one," said my father, "is going on favorably."

"O, quite; she is all right," answered Shackle. "By the by, I hope I am excused. There is a certain etiquette between medical men, — and I ought to apologize for interfering with one of your patients."

"Not at all! not at all!" cried my father. "We are both of us engaged in the same great mission — co-operators in the good work of alleviating human suffering."

"Exactly so — of the same order of *charity*," said Shackle, with a sneering emphasis on the last word, intended secretly for my father's gratuitous practice. "Yes, both of us are of one fraternity, or, as we should be called abroad, Brothers of Mercy," — a phrase which so delighted my father, that, seizing Shackle's hand between both his own, he warmly urged a request conceived some minutes before.

"With the utmost pleasure," replied Shackle, bowing, and returning the squeeze with apparent cordiality; and then the two doctors parted — one with an ivory smile on his face, that vanished the moment he turned his back; the other with a kindly glow on his countenance which promised to endure till the next meeting.

My father, however, instead of turning homewards, guided by some vague impulse, bent his steps towards the dwelling of the Hobbeses. — To see, after so many disappointments, how his kind intentions had thriven in that quarter? Perhaps so. Meanwhile little Sally was safe, and his whistle was resumed. He was conscious of the warmth and glory of the sunshine; heard and enjoyed the carol of the lark; observed the gray goose leading her callow yellow gulls across the road to the river; and laughed at the consequential airs of the hissing gander, as he sailed on, with raised stern, and one broken wing hanging down at his side, like the weather-board of a Dutch yacht. But a stranger spectacle was in store for him — a low mud cottage, rudely thatched with brown mossy straw and reeds — the broken panes of its one window stopped with dingy rags — and two men, in the livery of the magpie, but re-

pudiating its loquacity, in short, two Mutes, in black and white, standing one on each side of the humble door! My father stopped and rubbed his eyes like a man "drowned in a dream." But no, there they were, the two mummers, with their paraphernalia in their hands, surrounded by an undress circle of the village children, backed by an outer ring of men and women, who stared over their black, white, brown, red, yellow, cropped or curly little heads.

In another minute there was a stir and murmur of expectation amongst the crowd, — and first a black and white hat, and then a man in black with a white scarf, came stooping through the low door; followed by two other men in sables, carrying a little coffin, covered with French gray cloth, and studded with silvered nails. After a pause, as if to afford time for the spectators to gaze and comment on the handsome coffin and its ornaments, another attendant threw over it a black velvet pall with a white border; and then came forth the mourners, stumbling over the threshold, the Mother with a white handkerchief at her eyes; but the Father with his grief, all unveiled, writhing in his hard-featured, yellow face. The silk hood and scarf but partially concealed the shabby, ragged clothing of the poor woman; and the funeral-mantle was far too short for the tall man, whose mud-stained corduroys were visible a foot below its skirt; whilst one half of his best and worst beaver, brown in color and of no particular shape, bulged out roughly above the sleek hatband which encircled it, and thence flowed down his nape, and with a full convex curve over his high round shoulders. There was a moan from the crowd as the mourners appeared, and then a hush, only broken by the sobs of the bereaved parents, whereat the tender-hearted of the circle looked tearfully at each other, and clasped their hands. At last the man in black with the white scarf — composing his face, as it were, to some inaudible Dead March — solemnly took three steps forward, and then suddenly wheeling about, walked six steps backwards, with his eyes steadfastly fixed on the moving pall which followed him — and then three more steps backwards, but on his tiptoes, to look over the pall at the mourners — when all being right, he turned round again, and walked on, as slowly as he could pace, to eke out the very short distance between the hut of mourning and the church. The crowd, which had opened to the

procession, closed again, and followed in its wake — men, women, boys, and girls, all seriously or curiously interested in Death, except the vacant baby faces, which leaning chubbily on the mothers' shoulders, looked quite the other way.

"A foolish job, bean't it?" said an old woman, leaning on a crutch — quite too lame to follow the funeral. "To chuck away money that way! Quite a waste, bean't it?" — and she put up a tin ear-trumpet, and turned its broad end towards my father.

"It is, indeed!" cried my father, surprised by such an echo of his own reflections.

"Ay, bean't it?" repeated the old deaf woman. "And such poor paupers as them too — as might have had a burying by the parish!"

My father hesitated to answer. He knew the poor well; their intense abhorrence of a parish funeral; and the extreme sacrifices they would make to subscribe to a burial society, and secure a decent interment. But he thought it best to chime in with the old woman's humor.

"Of course they might," he said. "The Hobbeses are on the parish books already, and the overseer would, no doubt, have given them an order on the parish undertaker."

"Who will take her?" asked the deaf woman.

My father loudly repeated his words.

"Ay — an order for a common deal-box," screamed the old woman, in a voice so different to her former one, that my father looked round for another speaker. "A rough wooden thing, only fit for soap and candles! Look there!" and she pointed with her crutch — "I'd sooner bury a child o' mine, wi' a brickbat in yonder pool! But anything is good enow for the like of us to be packed into. Ay, an old tea-chest, or a forrin fruit chest, with our pauper corpses a bulgin out the sides, and showin, like the orangers, thro the cracks!"

"No, no, no!" shouted my father.

"But I say yes, yes," cried the old woman. "Screwed down in a common box, and jolted off, full trot, to be chucked into the parish pit-hole — and a good riddance of old rubbidge! And better that than to be made a gift of, privily, to the parish doctor! Ay, you! you! you!" she screamed, shaking her crutch in my father's face — "with your surgical cuttings, and carvings, and 'natomizings! And can hardly have patience to wait till people are dead!"

"If I know what you mean," bawled my father, "I'll be 'natomized myself!"

"O, not you, forsooth!" answered the old woman, who had imperfectly heard the anecdote of Kezia and the carving-knife, and, like other deaf people, had made her own blundering version of the story. "But you long, you know you do, to cut open little Sally Warner, and to look in her inside for the cause of her fits!"

My father winced — it would have vexed Job himself.

"Plague take it!" he said, as much rumpled as it was possible for him to be in his temper. "I do believe some dog has run mad, and bitten all the old women in the village!"

"Ay, that comes home to you," cried the crabbed cripple. "And mind Death don't come home too — to your own twin babies. To begrudge poor Sukey Hobbes her funeral! Suppose it was even a hearse and six, with ostrich plumage — and why not? An only child, quite a doting-piece, and begrudged nothing in life, by fond parents, if it cost the last penny, and why should she be begrudged by them in death — and gold and silver in the house? And which some say was flung in, by night through the window by Doctor Shackle, and that he owns to it, or leastways don't deny it — but I say, chucked down the chimbly by a Guardian Angel, in the shape of a white pigeon, as was seen sitting on the roof."

"No doubt of it," shouted my father, rubbing his nose, and quite restored to good-humor by his new metamorphosis. "There was a guardian angel seen lately sitting on a rock in America — only" — and he dropped his voice — "it turned out to be an exciseman tarred and feathered."

"That's true, then," said the old woman. "But the funeral will be coming back, and I must speak a condoling word to the Hobbeses. Poor souls! I know myself what it is to be childless — but it will be an everlasting blessed comfort and consoling to them to reflect they have given her such a genteel burying as was never seen afore in their spheres of life." And the old crone hobbled off on her crutch, leaving my father to whistle or talk to himself as he pleased. He did the last.

"Yes, the old deaf body is right. The money was intended for the comfort and consolation of the bereaved couple; and they were justified in seeking for them in the mode most con-

genial to their own feelings. An odd mode, to be sure, considering their usual habits and rank in life! And yet, why should not the poor have their whims and prejudices as well as the rich? Grief is grief, in high or low, and, like other morbid conditions, is apt to indulge in strange fancies. So let the guineas go — there are worse lavishings in this world than on the obsequies of an only child! And after all, if the money went foolishly, it came quite as absurdly — for medical attendance on a sick monkey!"

CHAPTER XI.

OUR DOCTOR'S BOY.

THE surgery was quiet — the assistant leisurely making up some sort of medical swan-shot — when my father entered, and hung up his hat.

"Well, I have met Doctor Shackle at last: — he was at Mrs. Warner's — and the child is better."

"I should like to meet him too," observed Mr. Postle, very calmly in tone, but squeezing his finger and thumb together so energetically, that the bolus which was between them — instead of a nose — was flattened into a lozenge.

"Then you will soon have that pleasure," said my father, "for I have asked him to the christening."

Mr. Postle turned faint, sick, red, and then white, with disgust: symptoms the Doctor must have observed, but that his attention was absorded by a phenomenon elsewhere.

It was Catechism Jack, — who after a preliminary peep or two from behind the door-post, at last crept, with a sidling gait and a sheepish air, into the surgery, where by eccentric approaches, like those of a shy bird, he gradually placed himself at the counter.

"Well, Jack," said my father, "what do you want?"

Jack made no reply; but dropping his head on his right shoulder, with a leer askance at my father, plucked his sodden finger out of his mouth, and pointed with it to one of the drawers.

"You see," said my father, in an aside to Postle, "the fellow is not quite a fool. He remembers where the lozenge came from."

"Mere animal instinct," answered Postle, in the same under tone: "a monkey would do as much, and remember the canister where he got a lump of sugar."

"I will try him further," said my father, putting his hand in the drawer for a lozenge, which he held out between his finger and thumb. "Well, Jack, what will you do if I give you this?" Jack eyed the lozenge — grinned — looked at my father; and then drawled out his answer.

"I'll say my Catechism."

"No, no, Jack," cried my father, "we don't want that. But will you be a good boy?"

"Yes," said Jack, his head suddenly drooping again, while a cloud passed over his face. "Yes, I will, — and not tumble down stairs."

"Poor fellow!" said my father. "They made a fault of his misfortune. I have a great mind to take him. Should you like, Jack, to get your own living?"

"Yes," answered Jack with alacrity, for my father had unconsciously given him a familiar cue — "to learn and labor truly to get my own living, and to do my duty in that state of life to which it may please God to call me."

"Catechism again!" whispered Mr. Postle.

"Yes, but aptly quoted and applied," answered my father. "Do you know, Jack, what physic is?"

Jack nodded, and pantomimically expressed his acquaintance with medicine by making a horrible grimace.

"Well, but speak out, Jack," said my father. "Use your tongue. Let us hear what you know about it. What's physic?"

"Nasty stuff," said Jack, "in a spoon."

"Yes," said my father, "or in a wine-glass, Jack, or in a cup. Very good. And do you remember my foot-boy, Job, who used to carry out the physic in a basket?"

Jack nodded again.

"Should you like to take his place, and carry out the medicine in the same way?"

"I — don't — know," drawled Jack, sympathetically sucking his finger, while he ogled the little oval confection, which my father still retained in its old position.

"Do you think you could do it?"

Jack was silent.

"Would you try to learn?"

"I learn two things," mumbled Jack, "my duty towards God, and my duty towards my neighbor."

"Not very apposite that," muttered Mr. Postle.

"Not much either way," answered my father; and he resumed the examination.

"Well, Jack, suppose I were to take you into my service, and feed and clothe you — should you like a smart new livery?"

"Yes."

"And a new hat?"

"Yes."

"And if I were to give you a pair of new shoes, would you take care of them?"

"Yes," answered Jack, "and walk in the same all the days of my life."

"There!" said my father, giving Postle a nudge with his elbow; "what do you think of that?"

"A mere random-shot," answered Mr. Postle.

"Not at all," said my father, turning again to his *protégé*. "Well, Jack, I have a great mind to give you a trial. If I take you into the house, and find you in a good bed, and comfortable meals, and a suit of clothes, and provide for you altogether, would you promise to behave yourself?"

"They did promise and vow three things in my name," answered Jack; "first, that I should renounce the devil and all his works —"

"Yes, yes," cried my father rather hastily, for Postle was grinning. "We know all that. But would you take care of the basket, Jack, and leave the medicine for the neighbors at the right houses, and attend to your duty?"

"My duty towards my neighbor," answered Jack, "is to love him as myself; and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me. — Give us the lozenge."

My father gave him the lozenge, which the lad eagerly popped into his mouth, occasionally taking it out again, to look edgeways at its thinness, till all was gone; and then deliberately licked his sweetened hand, beginning at the thumb, and ending with the little finger. My father, who had watched

every motion with intense interest, mechanically turned round to the drawer for another "Tolu;" but falling into a fit of musing at the same time, forgot the destination of the lozenge, and eventually clapped it into his own mouth, to the infinite discomfiture of Jack, who by a sudden depression of his features, while his head dropped on his bosom, and his arms fell straight by his sides, typified very vividly the common catastrophe of the Hope going down with all hands.

"Yes, my mind is made up," said my father, awakening from his reverie. "At any rate the unfortunate creature shall have a chance. With a little looking after at first, he will do very well."

Mr. Postle looked earnestly at my father, with an expression which might be translated "What next?"—then up at the ceiling with a shrug which signified "Lord, help us!"—and then performed "Confound it!" by a frantic worrying of his hair, as if it had been wool or flock that required teazing. To remonstrate, he knew was in vain. My father, in ordinary cases, was not what is called pig-headed; but in matters of feeling, his heart, as Postle said, was "as obstinate as the influenza, which will run its own course." In fact, from that hour "the Idiot" was virtually engaged *vice* Job,—for the parish of course made no objection to the arrangement; and as to the old dame, his guardian, my father found means, never exactly known, to reconcile her to the loss of her charge and the stipend. So the thing being settled, Mr. Postle made the best of it, and endeavored to initiate his subordinate in his duties: but it was hard work, and accordingly Kezia volunteered her help to convert Jack into our Doctor's Boy.

"To be sure," she said, "his faculties were not over bright, and he would protrude his catechiz at unseasoned times; but he was very willing, and well-disposed, and an orphan besides, and, as such, every woman ought to be his mother." And truly, however she found time for the labor, she turned him out daily so trim and clean, that could she have scoured up his dull mind to the same polish, Jack would have been one of the smartest boys in the parish.

CHAPTER XII.

OUR GODFATHER.

A MONTH and two days of our little lives had passed away, and another evening was in the wane, without any appearance of our worthy Uncle and Godfather elect, the rich and respectable Mr. Jinkins Rumbold.

He had written, briefly indeed, to accept the sponsorship, and to beg that the spare bed might be regularly slept in, seeing that he was subject to the rheumatism: but, although the morrow was appointed for the Christening, still he came not. No — although his mattress, thanks to the indefatigable Kezia, was well shaken, his blankets thoroughly aired, his sheets sweetly lavendered — a fire laid ready for lighting in the grate — a bowpot, daily renewed, on the mantel-shelf — and the Book of Common Prayer, with the leaf turned down at the Public Baptism of Infants, deposited on the walnut-wood table.

My mother was in despair; for she was a devotee of a very ancient and numerous sect, renowned for self-torture and voluntary martyrdom. Not that she ever scourged or flagellated her own body with cords or rods, or gashed her flesh with knives, or scored it with uncut talons, or wore sackcloth next her skin, or emaciated her frame by long fast or frequent vigils; but for such painful exercises as lying on metaphorical thorns, sitting on figurative pins and needles, or hanging on colloquial tenter-hooks, she was a first-class saint of the self-tormenting order of the Fidgets.

"It don't signify!" she said, in a crying tone, and flouncing down in the great white dimity-covered chair in the bedroom, as if her legs had suddenly struck work. "I 'm quite worn out! If my brother means to stand for his nephews, he ought to be here by this time. Here we are, as I may say, on the very brink of the font, and no godfather! — at least not certain. It is running it cruelly fine; it is, indeed!"

As my mother during these observations had first looked down at the floor, as if addressing the spirits under the earth, and then up at the ceiling, as though appealing to all the

angels in heaven, Mrs. Prideaux, in her intermediate sphere, did not feel called upon to reply, but continued quietly to rock the cradle.

"A stranger," continued my mother, "might be excused for indifference; but when a brother and an uncle exhibits such apathy, what *is* one to think?"

Still the nurse remained silent; for the speaker, during her apostrophe, had fixed her eyes on the neglected twins. But my mother was yearning for sympathy, and, therefore, aimed her next appeal point blank at the mark.

"I confess it does fret and worry me; but it is too bad, Mrs. P.; is it not?"

"Not having the pleasure to know the gentleman," replied Mrs. P., "I must beg to decline hazarding an opinion. The delay may have proceeded from procrastination, or it may have arisen from some accident."

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed my mother, clasping her hands, as if wrung by some positive calamity. "Yes, you are right! There must have been an accident! You only echo my own misgivings. There have been heavy rains lately, and the waters are out of course. O my poor, dear, drowned brother! To think that, perhaps, whilst I am blaming and reproaching you —"

She stopped, for at that very instant the door opened; and, ushered in by my father, and closely followed by Kezia, the dear undrowned brother walked into the chamber, perfectly safe and dry, and not a little astonished at the hysterical scream and vehement caress with which he was welcomed.

At last my mother untwined her arms from his neck, and sank again into the easy-chair.

"Thank God!" she exclaimed, "you are safe! But oh! how changed!" an observation she prudently whispered to herself; but which, nevertheless, was plainly telegraphed by the workings of her features. And truly the alteration she beheld would have justified a louder exclamation. From top to toe, the former Jenkins Rumbold had undergone a complete metamorphosis. Instead of his old-fashioned wig — formal, as if cut in yew, by some Dutch topiarian — he wore his own hair, or rather a fringe of it, to his bald head; — the quaint pigtail, which used to dangle at his nape, was also retrenched; but his chin, by way of compensation, displayed a beard like

a French sapper's. And where was his precise white cravat, with its huge bow? Discarded for a black silk kerchief, carelessly tied round his neck in the sailor style, with a lax double-knot. His silver knee and foot-buckles were likewise gone; for his square-toed shoes were replaced by a kind of easy buskins, and his kerseymere shorts had become longs, as wide and loose as the trousers of a marine. His waistcoat was unique; and his coat — cut after some original pattern of his own — was remarkable for the number and amplitude of its pockets: fit, there was none. He seemed to have won a suit of clothes in a raffle, and to have adopted them for his own wear from the sole merit of being so easy and roomy that he could roll about in them — like a great oracle of those days, Dr. Johnson.

What an Uncle! — what a Godfather!

Well might Kezia gape and gasp like a hooked gudgeon at such a phenomenon! Nay, the genteel nurse herself opened her eyes to a most vulgar width, and stared at the strange gentleman with a pertinacity quite inconsistent with her usual good manners.

My father alone was unmoved. Accustomed to the extraordinary whims and crotchets of sick and insane humanity, he was not surprised by the oddities of his kinsman, which he ascribed to their true source. The truth is, whilst the worthy drysalter remained in trade the monotonous routine of business induced and required a corresponding precision and formality of conduct and character. He had neither leisure nor leave to be eccentric. To caper and curvet on the commercial railroad is as dangerous as inconvenient and inconsistent. But once released from business, and its habits, like the retired tradesman who sets up his fancy carriage, or builds his "Folly," he started his hobby. Its nature chance helped to determine, by throwing into his way a certain treatise, by some cosmogony man of the Monboddo school, if not actually an unacknowledged work from the pen of the speculative philosopher, who maintained that Man, at the creation, had a tail like the Monkey. However, the original uncle Rumbold had so translated himself as to be hardly recognizable by his next of kin.

"Ah! I see how it is," he said. "You miss my wig and tail, and are boggling at my beard. A manly ornament,

is n't it — as intended by the Creator? For eighteen months, sister — for a year and a half, brother-in-law — no razor has touched my chin, and please God, never shall again — never! — at least while I preserve my reason. As for shaving, it 's a piece of effeminacy, the invention of modern foppery; to say nothing of the degradation of having your nose, that very sensitive feature, and one of the seats of honor, pulled here and there, right and left, up and down, at the will of a contemptible penny barber."

"Very degrading, indeed," said my father, stroking his own chin with his hand, as if coaxing a beard to grow from it.

"If there 's a ridiculous spectacle in the world," continued Uncle Rumbold, "it 's a full-grown man, a son of Adam the Great, with his human face divine lathered like a dead wall at its whitewashing — now crying with the suds in his eye, and then spitting with the soap in his mouth — and undergoing all this painful, and absurd, and disgusting penance for what? Why, to get rid of the very token that gives the world assurance of a man."

"Ridiculous enough!" said my father.

"My wig, on the contrary, was an artificial appendage, and accordingly I have abandoned it. If, as a sign of mature age, nature ordains me to be as bald as a coot, so be it — I will go to my grave with an unsophisticated bare sconce. The same with my queue. If she had intended me to wear a pig's tail bound in black ribbon, at my nape, she would have furnished me with one, or at least the germ of one, at my birth — but she did not, and therefore I have docked off the substitute."

"So I perceive," said my father.

"Yes, sir, as a foreign anomaly. But a beard," resumed Uncle Rumbold, "is quite another thing — a hair-loom, as I may say, from our first ancestor. Its roots were implanted in Paradise — and its shoots grew and flourished on the chins of the patriarchs. And what can we conceive more awful and majestic than the beards, white as the driven snow, and reaching down to the girdle of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, in their old age? But would they have been looked up to and implicitly obeyed by the people, as God's own vicegerents if they had shaved? Not they! — And what I should like to know, intimidated the barbarian Gauls when they invaded the *Roman Capitol?*"

"A flock of cackling geese," replied my mother, who had some random recollections of ancient history.

"A flock of cackling fiddlesticks!" cried Uncle Rumbold. "It was the beards, the venerable beards, of the Roman Senators. And I cannot help thinking that if our Members of Parliament adopted that classic fashion, and no men appeal oftener to the classics, they would not only deliberate with far more gravity and decorum, but frame laws much more wise, and profound, and just, than they do at present. In fact, all the great lawgivers wore beards. Look at Moses! — look at Solon! —look at Lycurgus! — look at our Alfred."

"If you please, sir," said Kezia — her patience worn out to the last thread — "won't you look at our twins?"

"Eh? what?" snapped Uncle Rumbold, annoyed in his turn, and waving off the maid of all work with an impatient sweep of his oratorical right arm. "By and by, my good woman, by and by. The twins, I suppose, are pretty much the same as other infants — little fat human squabs."

"As you please, sir," replied Kezia, with a courtesy, but heightening in color and expression towards a Red Lioness. "All I know is, they are such a pair of twin nevies as any uncle might be proud of — if he was the Grand Turk himself!"

"Well, well," said Uncle Rumbold, rather pleased than piqued by the allusion to his Oriental appendage. "Where are they? O, yonder! — Poor little wretches!"

"Poor little wretches!" exclaimed an echo, very like the voice of Kezia; but attributed by Uncle Rumbold to Mrs. Prideaux.

"Yes, poor little wretches!" he repeated, addressing himself to the nurse. "I do pity them — for of course they are to be bound up and bandaged like young mummies of the Nile."

"I presume you mean swaddled, sir," replied Mrs. Prideaux.

"I do, ma'am," said Uncle Rumbold, "that is to say, imprisoning their young, tender, free-born limbs with linen rollers, and flannel fetters, and other diabolical contrivances for cramping the liberty of nature. But perhaps, ma'am, you wear garters?"

The genteel nurse assented, with a slight bend of acquiescence.

"Because I never do," said Uncle Rumbold. "I detest all ligatures; they check the circulation of the blood, and consequently the flow of ideas. I once got upon my legs, with garters on, to speak in public, and I broke down at the very first sentence — I did, indeed! No, no — no ligatures for me! Look here, ma'am — and he threw open the bosom of his waistcoat — "no braces, you see! — but one garment buttoned on the other, like a schoolboy's."

"I am no judge, sir, of masculine habiliments," replied the genteel nurse; "but of the infantine costume I can speak, which is the same as custom prescribes in the highest families."

"Custom!" exclaimed Uncle Rumbold. "Confound custom! Why not be guided by the light of nature?" And he gave such a rhetorical blow on the head of the cradle, that the twins started broad awake in a fright, and began to pipe in concert like a double flageolet. In another moment they were sending their smothered cries through stuff and linen, into the bosom and very heart of the maid of all work, who, with an infant on each arm, hurried to the door, which she nevertheless contrived to unfasten, and then pushed wide open, with one leg and foot.

But Uncle Rumbold either overlooked or withstood the hints, and continued his harangue to the nurse.

"In the savage state, ma'am, the human animal has no swaddling. Look at the wild American pappoose."

"But ours an't pappooses," cried Kezia, — "they're babbies."

"Pshaw! — nonsense, woman!" said Uncle Rumbold. "Go to your kitchen. I say, ma'am, the human animal, in a state of nature, is never swaddled! — never! For example, the American Indians. Let us suppose that those two infants there, in the housemaid's arms, were young Crows, or Dog-Ribs — "

"I won't suppose any such falsities!" cried the indignant housemaid.

"Hush! hush, pray hush!" whined my mother. "Kezia, do hold your tongue, or I shall go distracted!" As in fact she was, poor woman, between her dread of offending our wealthy Godfather, and her horror of his doctrines. But my father enjoyed the discussion, and was sawing away with his

forefinger across the bridge of his nose, as if it had been that of a fiddle.

In the mean time my mother's interruption had drawn Uncle Rumbold's discourse upon herself. "I don't know, sister," he said, "if my spiritual capacity of Godfather invests me with any control over their physical education; but if those two boys were mine, every blessed day of their lives, wet or dry, shade or shine, hot or cold, they should enjoy for an hour or two the native liberty of their limbs, and sprawl and crawl as naked as they were born, on the grass-plot."

"Gracious goodness! — On the damp lawn!"

"Ay, or soaking wet, if it so happened; and what's more, the youngsters should have to climb some tree or other for their suspended victuals."

"Why, the poor things would starve!" exclaimed my mother.

"Not they," said Uncle Rumbold. "Trust to the light of nature! Hunger and instinct would soon teach them to scramble up the stem, like young monkeys — ay, as nimble as marmosets!"

My mother shook her head. "But they would sprawl and crawl into the fish-pond."

"So much the better," said Uncle Rumbold, "for then they might have a swim."

"But does that come by nature, too?" inquired my mother.

"Of course," answered Uncle Rumbold, "as it does to a fish. Look at the savage islanders — I forget what author relates it — but when one of the native canoes or proas was upset, a little Carib, of a week old, who had never been in the water before, kept swimming about in the sea, till the vessel was righted, as spontaneously as a dog."

My mother again shook her head.

"Fact, and in print," said Uncle Rumbold; "he was paddling about like a water-spaniel; and why not? The art of swimming is innate. Take your own twins, there, and chuck them into the river opposite — "

"The Lord forbid!" ejaculated my mother, to which Kezia responded with as fervent an "Amen."

"I say, chuck them into the river," repeated Uncle Rumbold, "and you will see them strike out with their arms and

legs as naturally as frogs. In fact, it is my decided opinion that man in his pristine state was intended by the Creator to be amphibious."

"Did you ever make, personally, any experiments in natation?" inquired my father, in his most serious voice.

"Why, I can't say that I ever did, exactly," replied Uncle Rumbold. "But what does that signify, when I 'm convinced of my theory? However, as I said before to my sister, if I am to have any share in the physical education of my godsons, those are the principles upon which, guided by the light of nature, I mean to act."

My father made a low bow, so low, that it would have seemed farcical, but for the air of profound gratitude which he contrived to throw into his countenance; but my mother involuntarily uplifted her hands and eyes, while Kezia, forbidden to speak, gave a low groan or rather grunt.

"In the mean time," resumed Uncle Rumbold, "I have not forgotten a sponsorial offering," and diving his hand into one of the many huge cloth closets or pockets in his coat, he extricated with some difficulty a brown paper parcel, which he presented rather ostentatiously to my mother.

"No trumpery spoons, sister, or jingling corals," he said, as her fingers nervously fumbled at the string — "but something that, rightly employed, will increase in interest and be a benefit to the boys through life."

My mother's fingers trembled more than ever at these words, and twitched convulsively at the double-knot, whilst a score of vague images, including a pile of bank-notes, to be invested in twin annuities, passed through her agitated mind. Kezia, with held breath, and broad, undisguised anxiety in her party-colored face, intently watched the unfolding of the successive coverings; and even in the well-bred Mrs. Prideaux curiosity triumphed so completely over courtesy, that she jostled and incommoded our Godfather in her eagerness to partake of the revelation. At last the inmost veil of lawn-paper was removed.

"A book!" murmured my mother.

Kezia fetching her breath again with a deep-drawn sigh, deposited the dear twins in the cradle and hastily left the room; while the genteel nurse, giving her head the slightest toss in the world, resumed her seat and her needlework.

"A book!" repeated my mother.

"Ay, the Book of books, as I call it," said Uncle Rumbold, — "the Bible, of course excepted."

"And a presentation copy," remarked my father, adroitly catching the volume as it slid off my mother's knees, "with the writer's autograph on the fly-leaf!"

"Yes — and a tall copy and unique, and privately printed," said Uncle Rumbold. "A work as original as scarce — as logical as learned — as correct as copious — as sensible as sublime — as captivating as convincing — as playful as powerful — as elegant as elevating — the life-long study of a profound philosopher — in short, a work worthy of its title — 'The Light of Nature!'"

"It is all very fine, no doubt," said my mother.

"A perfect treasury — a mine of riches!" exclaimed Uncle Rumbold. "The Holy Testament excepted, the world has never received such a legacy. And this, as I believe, the only copy extant! A gift, let me tell you, sister, that nothing but our near relationship, and my anxiety for the future welfare of two — I say *two* nephews — could have extorted from me."

"A mine — a treasury — and a legacy," repeated my mother, with a tear, that might or might not be a pledge of sincerity, gushing from either eye. "You are very kind, I 'm sure — very kind and considerate, indeed. — Who 's there?"

It was Catechism Jack, come to announce that supper was on the table, in the parlor. So the conference in the bedchamber broke up. Uncle Rumbold offered his arm to my mother to lead her down stairs; and my father, whistling a march, in a whisper, brought up the rear. Nothing worthy of record passed during the meal, except that the guest received and relished the mixture which had been promised to him by letter at the suggestion of Mr. Postle, namely, "a draught of something comforting to be taken the last thing at night — say, diluted alcohol sweetened with sugar." The dose was even repeated — and then the parties separated, and retired to their respective chambers.

"Well, my dear," asked my father, as he stepped into bed, "how do you like the 'Light of Nature'?"

"I wish," said my mother — but stopping short in the middle of her wish to give a vehement puff at the candle — "I wish I could blow it out!"

CHAPTER XIII.

OUR OTHER GODFATHER, AND THE GODMOTHER.

"GEORGE!"

"Well?"

"How is the morning?" asked my mother, entering full-dressed, and accosting my father, as he looked over the Venetian half-blind of the parlor-window.

"Why, I think," replied my father, considering those low dirty-looking clouds, with tattered dripping skirts, lounging about the horizon, like ragged reprobates who have slept all night in the open air and the gutter, that we shall have a general sprinkling to-day, as well as the particular one in the church."

"I am always unlucky in my weather," grumbled my mother, "especially when it is wanted to be fine. We shall be nicely soaked and draggled, of course; for the glass-coach must draw up at the turnstile-gate; and we shall have to paddle up the wet, sloppy churchyard, and the path has been new-gravelled, and the dripping yew-trees will green-spot all our things."

"You must take umbrellas and clogs," said my father.

"To go clattering up the avenue, and cluttering with into the porch! And the poor children will catch colds, and have the snuffles," added my mother, taking a desponding look at the dull sky over my father's shoulder. "Yes, it will rain cats and dogs, sure enough!"

"There will be the less mobbing," suggested my father.

"That's no comfort!" retorted my mother. "I don't mind a crowd, or being a spectacle, or I should certainly object to walk in public with my brother; for, unless I 'm mistaken, we shall have all the tag-rag and bobtail boys in the parish running after him like a Guy Fox. And Kezia too — as if it was necessary at a christening to dress up like a she-Harlequin, with cherry ribbons on a Mazarine blue bonnet, and a scarlet shawl over a bright green gown!"

"And our twins?"

"O, Mrs. Prideaux has kept *them* genteel — though it was

a struggle too — what with the rosettes and lace quiltings that Kezia wanted to stitch on their caps and robes. And then Jack — "

"What of him?" asked my father, with some alarm.

"I have only had one glimpse of him," replied my mother, "in his new livery; and clean washed and combed, and smartened up respectable enough, if he had n't ornamented his jacket with a parcel of strips of French gray cloth, as well as a great bow stuck in his hat, with a white-headed nail. But Mr. Postle has stripped off his finery, and sent him out with the basket."

"Very good," said my father; "and my bearded brother-in-law, has he been called? He ought to be dressed and down by this time, for he has n't to shave."

"O, pray don't joke about him," exclaimed my mother; "as it is, I 'm sadly afraid he 'll be affronted before he goes. Do all I can, I can hardly keep myself from flying out at his daring doctrines about the poor children — and, as to Kizzy, I verily believe she suspects he is an ogre in disguise. She can't bear him even to come near the infants, though he has only kissed them once since he came, and then she wiped their dear little faces directly, as if she thought they would catch his beard."

"And if they had," roared the gruff voice of Uncle Rumbold, as he pushed open the parlor-door which had been ajar; "if they had caught my beard, it 's better than catching the chin cough. But come, come, no apologies; I 'm not easily offended, or I should have been huffy just now with your housemaid, who told me to the hairy thing itself, that it ought to have been blue."

"Poor Kizzy," said my father, "she is plain and plain-spoken, but as honest and faithful as unrefined."

"Ah! a child of Nature," said Uncle Rumbold; "well, I like her all the better; and, if she has a sister disengaged in the same capacity, I 'll hire her on the spot. The true old breed of domestic servants is almost worn out, nearly extinct in England, like the bustard and the cock-of-the-wood — partly their fault and partly our own, by always setting them too high or too low — over our heads or under our heels — either pampered like pet monkeys, or snubbed like born slaves — never treated according to the light of nature. For instance, there 's the tender passion. It 's notorious that nine tenths of the poor

girls in Bedlam went crazy from suppressed sweethearts, and yet, forsooth, no followers are to be allowed; so that unless Molly falls in love with my lord, and John nourishes a flame for my lady, as he often does, by the way, they might as well have no human hearts in their bosoms. Whereas, servants have passions and feelings as well as ourselves — the same natural capacities for liking and loving — ay, and perhaps stronger at it too, as they are at scouring floors and scrubbing tables!"

How long this harangue might have proceeded is uncertain, probably till church time, but for a new arrival, our second godfather, the proctor from Doctors' Commons. In all outward and visible signs he was the direct antagonist of his co-sponsor. His beard and whiskers were cleanly shaved off; and although he was not bald, his hair was cropped as close as a pugilist's. Then his cravat was starched so stiffly, and tied so tightly, that he seemed in constant peril of strangulation: his coat fitted him like a skin, exhibiting a wasp-like figure suspiciously suggestive of stays; and his tight pantaloons were as tight as those famous ones, into which the then Prince of Wales could not get, it was said, without supernatural assistance. In his manners besides, he was as prim and reserved as our uncle was free and easy, — so that while introducing Mr. Titus Lacy to Mr. Jenkins Rumbold, my father could not help adding to himself, "*alias* Lord Chesterfield and Lord Rokeby."

Another tap at the parlor-door, and in stalked our godmother, Miss, or, as she was generally called, Mrs. Pritchard, a spinster as virtuous in reputation as Cato's daughter, and as towering above her sex, for she stood nearly six feet high without her cap. In features she rather countenanced the Rumbold practice, for though her upper lip was decidedly hairy she never shaved; but in her figure she inclined to the Titus Lacy persuasion, her waist was so very slender — whilst in her notions of the powers and duties of a sponsor, she differed from both; mysteriously hinting that by some mystical spiritual connection with the twins, she became more their mother than their mother, who was simply their parent in the flesh, and as such only entitled to wash, feed, and clothe their bodies, or to whip them if naughtiness required. My mother, it may be supposed, did not greatly relish or approve of this

doctrine: but the truth is, the unexpected refusal of a female friend, at the eleventh hour, had compelled her to accept the proffered sponsorship of Mrs. Pritchard, in spite of that lady's former declaration, that if she did become a religious surety, she would not be a nominal one, but fulfil her vows and act up to the character: the nature of which character she painted during breakfast in such colors, that, as Uncle Rumbold whispered to my father, "she promised to make a devil of a godmother!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHRISTENING.

My mother was out in her forebodings. By the time that breakfast was over, the ragged, dirty-looking clouds had skulked off, and the tall poplar over the way shot up into a clear blue sky. The narrow strip of river that was visible above the grassy bank glittered like a stream of molten gold; and the miller's pigeons, a sure sign of settled weather, were flying in lofty circles in the sunny air, casting happy glances, no doubt, at the earth beneath and the heaven above, instead of a steak under and a crust over them.

Even the little shabby boys who kept jumping over the post on the near side of the road, evidently reckoned on "Set Fair," for while many of them were without hat or cap, and some had no coat, great or small, none had brought umbrellas, — few had even water-proof shoes on their feet, much less clogs. A great comfort and relief it was, the said solitary post, to the young expectants, most of whom had to wait a couple of hours, more or less, before the glass-coach, driven by one man and a nosegay, and drawn by a pair of horses and two peonies, pulled up at the Doctor's door.

The mob in the mean time greatly increased, for a rumor of the bearded godfather, exaggerated, as the tale travelled, into the Grand Turk and the Great Mogul, had flown throughout the parish, so that when the gentlemen — who preferred to walk to the church — issued from the house, it was through

an avenue planted with men, women, and children, six deep, and amidst a cheer which only the united Charity Schools, of both sexes, could have composed.

"Huzza!" they shouted, — "Moses forever! — Huzza! for the Great Mogul!" with other cries which our eccentric uncle would fain have loitered to enjoy and retort, but for the hauling at one arm of Mr. Titus Lacy, who was disgusted with the familiarity of the lower orders, and the dragging on the other side of my father, anxious to be in good time. But the mob was not to be shaken off or left behind any more than the swarming flies that encircle a horse's head. Even so, a buzzing cluster of satellites, male and female, old, middle-aged, and young, kept running, shuffling, trotting, behind, beside, and before the persecuted trio, whom, with a suffocating cloud of dust, they accompanied along the road, through the churchyard, and up the yew-tree avenue to the ancient porch, where an offcast of the curious but less active inhabitants, the lame, the infirm, and the indolent, awaited their arrival.

Thanks to this diversion, the glass-coach followed with a smaller escort, yet not so few but that there was constantly at each window the bobbing head of some long-legged lad or lass snatching peeps, by running jumps, at my mother and godmother, in full dress, sitting bolt upright on the back-seat, and on the front one Mrs. Prideaux and Kezia, both in their best, and each holding a remarkably fine twin in her arms or on her lap. But it was otherwise when the females alighted at the churchyard-gate and walked up the avenue, where the minority joined the majority of the mob. Then all the clamor was renewed. "Huzza! Old Close! Longbeard forever! Huzza for the Great Mogul! Who 's lost his Billy Goat?" with other cries more or less jocose, and some hostile ones, indicative, alas! of my poor father's declining popularity.

"Who frightened Sally Warner into fits?" screamed a gawky girl, pointing with her coarse red finger at Kezia.

"And who wanted to 'natomize her?" bawled an old lame woman, shaking her crutch at the Doctor.

"And won't sell opie!" grumbled a surly-looking laborer.

"And prescribed a child to sleep with a sick monkey," cried a woman with a green shade over her eyes.

"And a parish-burying for our poor Sukey," muttered a tall man with a black hatband on his brown hat.

"And begrudged us our Godsend!" murmured a woman in rusty mourning.

"That is untrue at any rate," said my father to himself; and with the serenity of a good man conscious of the rectitude of his intentions, he stepped smilingly into the church, where the curate was waiting, and the whole party being assembled the baptismal ceremony immediately began. And for a time the service proceeded with due decorum, till about the middle of it, when the clergyman had to demand, "Dost thou in the name of this child renounce the Devil and all his works?"

"I do," shouted a voice from one of the pews, "and all the sinful lusts of the flesh."

Every eye instantly turned in the direction of the sound, and at once recognized a well-known face, with its mouth sucking at a forefinger just clapped into it.

It was Catechism Jack, — who had been betrayed, by a familiar phrase in the service, into one of his old responses.

The curate paused, and made a signal to the beadle, who proceeded to eject the unlucky respondent from the church, — not without an altercation and a struggle, for Jack pleaded piteously to be allowed to see the christening, and even clung to the pew-door, from which at length he was wrenched, with a crash and a jingle of broken glass, whilst a powerful and disagreeable odor quickly diffused itself throughout the building.

"There goes a whole basketful of physic," said my father *sotto voce* to himself.

"So much the better," said Uncle Rumbold, in the same suppressed tone. "Trust to nature."

"O, I shall die! I shall swoon away!" murmured my mother, showing a strong inclination to go into a fit on the spot, but the hysterical passion was scared away by a stern, emphatic whisper from Mrs. Pritchard.

"Don't faint HERE!" and then turning to the curate and pointing with her long bony forefinger to the font, she added aloud: "I object, sir, to that consecrated element being used for reviving!"

The protest, however, was unnecessary, for my mother recovered without any relief from water, save what stood in her own eyes; and order being restored, the ceremony proceeded to the end without interruption, or anything extraordinary —

except that at the final exhortation, when every one else was standing up according to the printed direction, Kezia was observed on her knees, evidently offering up a private extempore prayer, — a departure from the orthodox rite, which incurred a severe rebuke from Mrs. Pritchard the moment the curate had pronounced the last syllable of the service.

"Well," said Kezia, mistaking the drift of a lecture that insisted on a strict observance of the ceremonials, "and if I did kneel down without a cassock — " she meant a hassock.

"But you were putting up a heterodox petition of your own framing," interrupted the angry spinster.

"Well, I own I was," answered Kezia; "for the two dear little lively members just admitted into the church. And where 's the harm if it did proceed from my own heart and soul, instead of the Common Prayer Book? — It was religiously composed, and I do hope," she added, unconsciously adopting the language of her bakery, "I do hope and trust it won't rise the worse for being home-made."

Here the controversy dropped; and the usual entries and signatures having been made in the vestry, the family party reissued from the porch, saluted by the same cries as before, along the yew-tree avenue, and through the churchyard-gate, where the majority of the mob dispersed in different directions, so that the Great Mogul and the glass-coach were followed by only the idlest of the boys and girls, and of those one or two dropped off in every dozen yards.

The moment my father reached home he hurried into the surgery, and related to Mr. Postle what had occurred in the church with the medicine and Catechism Jack.

"I knew it! Say I told you so!" exclaimed Mr. Postle. "What else could come of intrusting the basket practice to an idiot! But of course, sir, you will discharge him directly."

"Certainly," replied my father, his good sense immediately recognizing the policy of the measure, but his humanity as promptly suggesting a loophole for evasion. "Yes, he shall be discharged on the spot, — that is to say, should the beadle be dismissed, for from what I saw of the scuffle, he had quite as much to do with the downfall of the basket as poor Jack."

By a curious coincidence, whilst Mr. Postle in the surgery was thus advising my father to send away the footboy, Mrs.

Pritchard, in the parlor, was recommending to my mother a month's warning for Kezia, and with a similar result.

"Why, she does forget her own sphere, dreadfully," said my mother; "and puts herself very forward in the parlor, and in the nursery, and even in the surgery, besides behaving very improperly and independently, as you say, ma'am, in the church. — Yes, I must and will part with her — at least as soon as I can find another like her, to do the work of three servants — and which I never shall."

CHAPTER XV.

THE SUPPER.

THE clock struck nine.

As settled in domestic conclave, the dinner had been only a plain early meal, at which the two godfathers and the godmother were treated as three of the family, the grand festival in honor of the christening being reserved for the evening; and my mother, attended by Mrs. Pritchard, had just slipped from the drawing-room to inspect the preparations.

"Beautiful, is n't it?" she said, looking along the supper-table, gay with flowers and lights, and brilliant with plate, of which there was an imposing display.

"Very genteel, indeed I might say elegant," replied Mrs. Pritchard, fixing her gaze especially on her own epergne. "And those silver branches, too, they are almost as handsome and massive as the Cobleys', and of the same pattern."

"Between you and me," said my mother, "they *are* the Cobleys'; and the tankard, you know, is Mr. Ruffy's, a present from one of his rich clients."

"And those silver-gilt salts are the curate's, I believe," said Mrs. Pritchard, "a parting gift from his late flock?"

"I believe it was," said my mother.

"And the dessert-spoons," inquired the tall spinster who had made the tour of the table; "all with different crests and initials — pray is that a new fashion?"

"They are the school spoons from Mrs. Trent's," said my mother, reddening. "But the knife-rests are our own."

"And if I may ask," said Mrs. Pritchard, "how many friends do you expect?"

"Why, all those who have lent plate, of course," replied my mother — namely, "the curate, the Cobleys, the Ruffys, Mrs. Trent, and Mrs. Spinks."

"Who!" exclaimed Mrs. Pritchard, in a tone like the pitch-note of an Indian war-whoop.

"Why, she is rather unpleasant, to be sure," said my mother; "but that is her salver on the sideboard. Then there 's Colonel Cropper of the Yeomanry, who is to come in his uniform, and the Squire has half promised to drop in — and if it had n't been for that nasty little Brazilian Marmot — I ought to have said Marmoset — we might have hoped for the lady at the great house. Then there 's Doctor Shackle, and the Biddles — and the Farrows — and young Fitch, altogether about fourteen or fifteen, besides ourselves."

"Just a nice number for a party," said Mrs. Pritchard, "if they all come."

"They are late, certainly, very late," replied my mother, her heart sinking like the barometer before a storm, at the mere suggestion of disappointments. "But hark! there is an arrival!" and with the tall spinster, she hurried into the drawing-room to receive her guest. It was the unpleasant Mrs. Spinks. Next came Doctor Shackle; and then, after a long interval, the wit of the neighborhood, young Mr. Fitch, a personage against whom Uncle Rumbold instantly felt that violent antipathy which he invariably entertained towards a dandy, or, in the language of those days, a buck.

"I 'm early, I 'm afraid," said the wit, looking round at the circle of unoccupied chairs.

"Or like myself, a little behind the mode," said Doctor Shackle. "I forgot that nine o'clock with fashionable people means ten."

"Then we are to have a fashionable squeeze, I suppose," said young Fitch, "a rout as they call it — a regular cram?"

"O no!" cried my mother, eagerly, "only a few, a very few friends, quite in a quiet way."

"About twenty," said Mrs. Pritchard.

"And there are only six come!" observed the unpleasant Mrs. Spinks, deliberately counting heads.

"Are you sure, my dear," inquired Mrs. Pritchard, "that your invitations were correctly dated?"

"O, quite!" replied my mother, "for I wrote all the notes myself, and to make sure had them delivered —"

"By Catechism Jack," said Doctor Shackle.

"No, indeed!" cried my mother, "but by a special messenger."

"Yes, a charity boy," said Mrs. Spinks. "And I know personally that Mrs. Trent had her note; and so had the curate, and the Biddles."

"It's very odd," muttered my mother; "the Biddles were always early, and I made sure of Mrs. Trent. She ought indeed to have come to tea. It is very strange — very strange, indeed!"

"Pooh! pooh!" said my father. "By and by they will all come in a lump; and if they don't we shall only be the snugger."

"And in the mean time," said young Fitch, "the great Bashaw there with the black beard will perhaps amuse us with one of his three *tails!*"

"I am sorry, young man," said Uncle Rumbold, in his gruffest voice, "that I am not a naval Bashaw, or I would amuse you with nine."

At this retort, delivered with the look and growl of an enraged lion, the abashed wit hastily retreated to a chair; and the little buzz of conversation which had sprung up, was hushed as by a clap of thunder. There was a pause — a long, dead pause — and to make it more dreary, the family clock — an old-fashioned machine with stout works and a strong pulse — stood in the hall, so near the drawing-room door, that its tick! tack! was distinctly audible, like the distant hammering of endless nails into an eternal coffin. Tick! tack! — tick! tack! O, that monotonous beat, — only broken by a sudden "click!" like the cocking of a gigantic pistol, and which made every one start, as if Death had actually given warning instead of Time! And then, tick! tack! again, — till with an alarming preliminary buzz the clock struck ten. The odious Mrs. Spinks was the first to speak.

"Quite a quakers' meeting!"

But nobody replied to the remark. The wit continued mute — the tall spinster merely looked wonderingly at my mother, who looked inquiringly at my father, who slightly shrugged his shoulders, and looked up at the ceiling. Mr. Titus Lacy was habitually taciturn, and Doctor Shackle only opened his lips in a sardonic smile.

At last, at a private signal from my mother, my father came and placed his ear to her mouth.

"For heaven's sake, George, do talk! — and get young Fitch to rattle — why don't he rattle?"

"The Bashaw killed him," whispered my father. "But I will do what I can." And by a desperate rally, he contrived to get up a brief conversation; but the fates were against him. Doctor Shackle seemed determined to answer in monosyllables; and Uncle Rumbold's hobby, in spite of a dozen allusions to the light of nature, refused to be trotted out. At last my father's own spirit began to share in the general depression — the discourse, such as it was, again dropped, and then — tick! tack! tick! tack! — Oh! it was horrible! — the only sound, it seemed, in the wide world. Not a knock — not a ring! No one came — nobody sent an apology. — What on earth could be the matter! The clock struck eleven!

"I believe," said my mother in a faint voice, "we need not wait any longer."

"We have waited too long already," said Uncle Rumbold; "at least I have — and long to satisfy the cravings of nature."

"Give your arm, then, to Mrs. Pritchard," said my father. "Mr. Lacy will escort Mrs. Spinks; the Doctor will convey my wife, and I will take care of Fitch;" and in this order the company, if company it might be called, marched, melancholy as a walking funeral, into the supper-room — joined, in their progress through the hall, by Mr. Postle.

My poor mother! A demon might have pitied her, as she took her place, and cast a rueful look at my father at the bottom of the table, flanked on each side by six empty chairs. A fiend would have felt for Kezia, as she stood, death-pale, behind the back of Doctor Shackle, not from any partiality to that sneering personage, but that she might exchange looks and signs of wonder and grief with Mr. Postle, who sat opposite.

"A pity, is n't it?" said Mrs. Spinks across the table to Mrs. Pritchard; "such a beautiful supper! — enough for thirty — and only nine to sit down to it!"

"We must make up in mirth," said my father, "for our lack of numbers," and again he made a gallant but vain attempt to revive the spirits of his guests. Besides the common gloom, he had to contend with the animosity of Mr. Postle against Doctor Shackle, and the antipathy of Uncle Rumbold to Mr. Fitch. An unlucky joke hastened the catastrophe. The wit, emboldened by wine, had the temerity again to attack the Bashaw.

"Allow me," he said, "to recommeud a little of this," at the same time thrusting a frothy spoonful of trifle as near as he dared to the redoubtable beard.

"Sir," said Uncle Rumbold, snatching up a full glass of ale, "if I consulted the law of retaliation — which is one of the laws of nature — in return for your lather, I should present you with this wash for the face. I say, I should be justified in so doing; but from respect to the present company I shall only drink to your better manners."

A momentary silence followed this rebuke; and then came a sound which startled all the company, but one, to their feet. As in pile-driving, there is a point beyond which the weight, called the monkey, cannot be screwed up; so there is a certain pitch at which human fortitude gives way, — and my mother's had reached that limit. The agitation, the mortification, the mental agony she had so long suppressed, had at last overstrained her nerves, and with an involuntary scream, such as is said to come from persons who have swallowed prussic acid, she went into strong hysterics. My father and Kezia instantly hastened to her assistance, but to little effect; either the fit was so obstinate, or the patient.

"Nothing serious," said Dr. Shackle, "she will soon recover, and in the mean time her best place is bed."

The hint was taken; the company immediately broke up; and whilst my mother was carried up stairs to her chamber, her grand christening party — of two gentlemen and two ladies — unceremoniously departed.

"Only four out of twenty!" gasped Kezia to Mrs. Prideaux, whom she had dragged apart into a corner of the bedroom; "only four out of twenty! — What, in mercy's name, can it all mean!"

"The meaning is plain enough," answered the genteel nurse, in her calm, sweet voice, — "your master is a ruined man."

CHAPTER XVI.

A MYSTERY.

Our family was in bed. My mother had sobbed herself to sleep; my father lay dreaming by her side; the twin infants were in their cradle; the whole house was quiet, except only the ticking of the old clock in the hall, the chirping of the cricket in the kitchen, and a dull, intermitting sound from one of the upper bedrooms, as if from somebody imitating through his nose the croaking of a frog in the fens.

The clock had struck one, and was about to strike again, when the door of the back attic opened, and Kezia, stepping forth in her night-clothes, and without any candle, walked deliberately down the stairs to the door of the room in the first floor appropriated to the nursery. Here for a moment she paused, the attraction within having overcome or diverted her original impulse; but her true errand speedily recurred to her, and descending the other flight, she crossed the hall, and entered the surgery, to the extreme alarm and astonishment of the two persons who were conversing therein.

The one was a female in a flannel wrapper, tied with green ribbon, and occupying the wooden arm-chair devoted to the accommodation of patients or impatients awaiting the making up of their prescriptions; the other, a strange man, with his hat on, was seated on the counter, whence, with his elbows resting on his knees, he stooped down towards his companion, his face close to hers, in earnest communion. At a glance, he was what was called in the slang of those days a Blood or Buck; in the cant of our own times, a Swell. Cigars were not yet in vogue; or, to a certainty, he would have had one between his lips: but he wore his beaver with the rakish, jaunty air still affected by gentlemen and journeymen who conceive themselves superior in acuteness, spirit, and an exten-

sive knowledge of life, to the rest of the world. His clothes were expensive and fashionable. Round his throat he wore a very fine white cravat, so ample that his neck seemed poulticed, the ends being tied in a large ostentatious bow. His coat was blue, with fancy gilt buttons, a deep turned-down collar, and lappels, that for size might have served for ears to a Newfoundland dog. His waistcoat, of buff or primrose color, was double-breasted, long in the waist, and flapped, with a black ribbon crossing it from the left shoulder to the gold-mounted quizzing-glass in the left-hand pocket. His lower limbs were clad in gray stocking-pantaloons, tight as skin, and cased up to the well-made calf in Hessian boots, but somewhat deficient in polish, and minus one tassel. His coat, too, had the fluffy tumbled appearance of having occasionally taken its own nap with its master's on a feather-bed, or one of flock; his waistcoat was ill-washed; his pantaloons were soiled in sundry parts, and especially at the knees; and his cravat, besides its dingy hue, was wrinkled and flaccid. Altogether, there was as much of the sloven as of the beau in his costume — in his physiognomy, a corresponding mixture of the gentleman and the reprobate. His face was handsome; but had the faded, jaded look consequent on habitual debauchery. His large dark eyes were dry and bloodshot, with crowfoot wrinkles at the corners; and under each organ a flabby bag, as if for secreting the tears to be shed in the maudlin stage of intoxication. His cheeks were of a dull white, blotched with yellow and red, that deepened in his prominent nose to a crimson. His lips were parched and cracked; his chin was neutral-tinted by a bluish beard of two days' growth; and his long black hair and whiskers were foul and matted. Smart and slovenly; well featured, but with a sinister expression; dashing, but dirty; unbrushed, unwashed, uncombed, unshorn, he looked the rake, with a strong spice of the ruffian, whose attribute, a thick knotted bludgeon, lay handy beside him on the counter. On the other side, stood something of indefinite shape tied up in a cotton shawl; and near the bundle, the nursery rushlight, and an empty rummer, with a silver spoon in it. There could hardly be a greater contrast than between the female in the arm-chair and her nocturnal visitor; and yet the time, the scene, and the manner of their *tête-à-tête*, inferred the most confidential and familiar

intercourse. Was it possible that the repulsive, dissolute, villanous-looking man on the counter was anything near or dear to the genteel, sweet-spoken, well-bred, lady-like Mrs. Prideaux?

To confirm and justify an affirmative answer, certain chronological characteristics must be taken into consideration. In these, our own times, so remarkable for a refined taste in art and literature, in manners and morals, the Court Callendar possesses more attractions for females than the Newgate one. There is no longer a rage for genteel highwaymen or eminent housebreakers. As pets, Brazilian monkeys are preferred to malefactors, and parrots to jail birds. Our mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters no longer admire the chivalrous courage of a horse-pad, whose utmost deed of daring — the presentment of a loaded pistol at an unarmed man — has been outdone by every light or heavy dragoon who has seen service. They no longer fall in love with a Knight of Roads for robbing them like a gentleman, and paying compliments to their beauty, and calming their feminine fears, at the cost of their purses, watches, brooches, bracelets, and finger-rings and earrings. A vulgar burglar, renowned for breaking into houses and out of prisons, is hardly reckoned on a par with the hero of successful sieges and sorties; or an obdurate ruffian who goes to the gallows with a bold face as a rival of the gallant veteran who leads a forlorn hope. A common murderer is no longer a lady-killer to boot; nor does a dashing pickpocket triumph in female preference over a plain honest man "innocent of stealing silver spoons." But it was otherwise formerly; when, in the current phrase, a daring felon became a darling fellow, and a precious rascal a charming rogue. It was then quite usual for ladies of rank and breeding, of family and fortune, to visit condemned criminals in Newgate — entwining with fair and noble arms the neck destined to an ignominious rope, —beseeching keepsake locks from the head soon to be shrouded in an infamous nightcap; and hanging with aristocratical fondness on a plebeian body about to swing shamefully from Tyburn Tree.

Thus, as worn-out fashions descend, like cast-off clothes, from mistress to maid, the example set by a lady of quality in the time of the First George, might very well be followed by a nurse in the reign of George the Third. However,

robber or rake, there was the strange man, admitted, in the middle of the night, to a mysterious interview in the surgery, the door of which opened, round the corner of the house, into a lane.

At the entrance of Kezia the parties both started, and the man would have sprung up and spoken but for the warning of the nurse, who raised one hand with its forefinger on her lips, whilst she held him down with the other. In truth, the figure of the housemaid in its white garments, obscurely seen by the dim gleam of the rushlight, was quite spectral enough to shake the courage of a dissolute man, with nerves unsettled by drink. His frame trembled, his face turned ashen pale, and his teeth chattered as he exclaimed in a hoarse whisper —

"A stiff-un walking — by G—d!"

The nurse, with a dissenting shake of the head and her lips indicating a silent "No!" repeated her warning gesture to her companion, who, open-mouthed but breathless, watched with straining eyes every movement of the apparition. In the mean time Kezia, walking behind the counter, took her usual station beside the desk, but in silence, as if awaiting the leisure of her confidential adviser in all difficulties, Mr. Postle.

"All safe!" said the nurse in a very low but distinct whisper: "she 's sleep-walking!"

The man, as if suddenly relieved of a pectoral spasm, immediately drew his breath in a long deep sigh, and set himself intensely to watch and listen to the sayings and doings of the somnambulist, who at length spoke.

"This is a dreadful mysterious business, Mr. Postle. Twenty invited, and only four to come! What can it all mean?" and she paused for a reply, which having dreamed, she resumed: —

"No, the night was not bad enough for that. Besides, the Cobleys have their own carriage, and so has the Colonel and the Squire, who would have brought the Curate along with him. Then the Biddles have the mule cart, and the Ruffys always hire a po-shay. As for Mrs. Trent and the rest, they don't mind wind and rain, but lap up and visit in all weathers. No, — it could n't be that! And such a beautiful supper, too! And such a splendid turkey — with a giver under one wing

and a lizard under the other — I should say quite the reverse. And then the sweets! I could have cried into hysterics myself, to see all the nice jellies, and creams, and custards, and nobody to eat them, for they *was* nice — if they did taste a little of the shop, as that odious Doctor Shackle said, meaning, I suppose, the almond flavor you was so kind as to oblige me with out of the surgery."

The imaginary Mr. Postle here probably vented an oath, for which she checked him.

"Yes, he certainly is malicious — but don't imprecate. It's profane, and forbid in Scripture. Swear not at all — no, not even at an enemy or a buzzum friend. To be sure, the Doctor was very sneering and provoking, and especially about the wine being good enough to need no bush except out of our own garden. I could have found in my heart to drop a blank mange on his medical head! And that foolish young Fitch, to affront Mr. Uncle Rumbold to his very beard, instead of having a perfect haw of it, as any one would in their senses, it makes him look so like a conjurer. And then that abominable Mrs. Spinks as would n't let the thing drop, but kept counting the empty chairs, and saying that every one had a banker's ghost in it — Banko's I should say — I declare she made the hair stand upright on my very head. Though for that matter, I would almost as soon have seen a ghost in every seat, and Scratching Fanny among them, rather than nobody at all! I never knew such a case afore — never, except once, — and that was at my first place."

The ideal assistant asked, of course, for the story.

"Why, the way was this. Master had come home with a prodigious wealth of money from foreign parts, and on setting up his establishment in London, determined to give a very grand party, by way of housewarming, to his neighbors. Well, the night came, with the rooms chalked for dancing, and all lighted up with wax-candles and cut-glass chandeliers, and the most elegant supper set out, only for seventy people instead of twenty, — but nobody came. Nine o'clock, ten, eleven, — the same as at our own unfortunate regalia, but not a soul — not a knock or a ring, except the cook's cousin, the footman's sister, and the housemaid's brother and uncle — at least not till about twelve, when a single gentleman asked to speak with master in private, and then out it all came, for we listened at

the study-door. Some spiteful person, in revenge for not being invited, had ferreted out master's secret history, and had whispered about in unanimous letters that he were a returned convert — I should have said a convict — from Botany Bay. He had been sent there for some errors in youth, but had reformed himself, and got rich by opulence, like Dick Whittington, and so got leave to come home again. But of course that don't apply to us, whom have never been arranged in court or transported, though fought as shy of by society as if we had. What is your own notion of it, Mr. Postle?"

A long silence ensued, of which the nurse took advantage to whisper to her companion, whom she beckoned with her finger, and then pointed to the door. "She must not wake and see you. Come; but move cautiously — as quiet as death."

"Is this all?" asked the man in a low grumble, and with a motion of his head towards the bundle.

"It must serve for this turn," whispered the nurse. "Quick! and away!"

The fellow instantly slid gently down from the counter and clutched the bundle, whilst the nurse turned down the rush-light in the socket. Then there was a slight rustle, with the sound of two or three hasty kisses. The next moment the outer door was partially opened — a cool gust of air came inwards, as the dark figure of the man passed outwards — the door slowly closed again, and the fastenings were replaced with less noise than is made by a mouse. The nurse then groped to the counter, where she found her candlestick and the empty rummer, but not the spoon, a loss she instantly comprehended — the bundle had not quite served for the turn — but her equanimity was undisturbed; and cautiously feeling her way out of the surgery, she crept, silent as a spirit, up the stairs to the nursery, leaving Kezia to her dreaming conference with Mr. Postle.

"Yes," she said, "there is some dreadful misfortune hanging over us, no doubt. My poor dear master! Mrs. Prideaux foretells he is a ruinated man. But oh! Mr. Postle! — and the tears oozed from her eyelids while she clasped her hands in earnest appeal to him — "whatever comes of it, don't let nothing tempt us two to leave and better ourselves, and for-

sake them, whose bread we eat, in their adversity. For my part, I 'm ready and willing to take a solemn religious oath on my bended knees" — and she suited the action to the word — "and trust you will do the same; never, never, never to give warning, nor take it neither, but to stand by the family and do for it to my last grasp, — namely, my poor dear master and missis, and them two lovely, helpless, innocent twin babes!"

What promise the imaginary Mr. Postle made, and whether with the prescribed ceremony, is unknown; but it gave the liveliest satisfaction to the devoted maid of all work. The expression of her features was indeed invisible in the dark to human ken; but heaven, with its starry eyes, beheld her face shining with joy and gratitude.

"The Lord bless you, dear, dear Mr. Postle, for that comfort," she said, rising from her knees, and wiping her eyes with the sleeve of her only garment. "It 's exactly my own feeling and sentiments. Yes, if I was courted at this very moment by twenty prostrated lovers at my feet, with bags of gould in one hand, and wows of constancy in the other, I would n't change my state, but refuse them all, and live single for the sake of the family — and which reminds me it 's eight o'clock, and the breakfast to make."

So saying, led by that mysterious guidance which directs the somnambulist — whether some supernatural *clairvoyance*, or more probably an internal geographical scheme, corresponding with the external locality, and producing an exquisite consciousness by touch, independent of sight, of long familiar distances and habitual turns and windings — however, without blunder or collision, the sleeping Kezia passed hastily from the surgery, through the hall, into her kitchen, to prepare the morning meal to which she had referred. But here the guiding faculty was at fault. Besides the old furniture and utensils, on every article of which she could, blindfolded, have laid her hand, the floor was occupied by sundry novel and strange contrivances for holding the superabundant relics of the festival overnight. Against one of these extempore dressers she walked, with a force and a clatter that startled her wide awake, with one hand in a jelly, and her nose seemingly testing the sweetness of a boiled ham. The darkness, the cold, her undress, and the remembrance of former noc-

turnal excursions, instantly suggested the truth; her mind however retaining no trace of her recent dream; so, after a single exclamation of surprise, she quietly groped for the tinder-box, lighted a spare candle, and yawning and shivering, crept up stairs to the back garret, to get a brief rest, before the very early hour at which she regularly resumed the multifarious labors of her industrious days.

CHAPTER XVII.

A CLEW.

In the surgery — so lately the scene o. a double mystery, of a clandestine midnight meeting and unconscious somnambulism — of treacherous, heartless vigilance and honest devotion faithful even in sleep — at his old desk stood Mr. Postle, apparently studying some medical work, but in reality thinking over the supper of the night before and puzzling himself to account for the absence of the guests. But his meditations were in vain: to use one of his own favorite illustrations, he might as well have tried to make a nosegay with Flowers of Sulphur.

Meanwhile, in looking at his old prompters, along the wall from shelf to shelf, with all the parade of nice-looking nastiness arranged thereon in rows of glass bottles and white jars, marked with cabalistical signs, — his eye detected one receptacle breaking the uniformity of the series by being turned with its label to the wall. But he did not need to see the gilt scroll to know its inscription — "Tinct. Opii."

"Confound that idiot!" he muttered. "He will poison himself yet with his sweet tooth and his tastings. I can trace the mark of his wet finger on the bottles and drawers like the track of a snail. Only yesterday I had to teach him that Ferrum Tart. does not stand for pastry, nor Cerat. Plumb. for almonds and raisins, — and now he has been at the laudanum?"

For once, however, Catechism Jack was mistakenly accused. No finger of his, wet or dry, had approached the

dangerous narcotic. Another meddler, rather sharp than dull of intellect, had removed the stopper for a less innocent purpose than to test the flavor of the tincture. The dear Twins owed their very sound sleep in the night to a minute dose from that displaced bottle.

The assistant carefully rectified its position, and returning to his desk began, with pen and ink, to sketch — another of his habits — on the quire of blotting-paper before him, his designs being generally of the anatomical class, outlines of bones, muscles, and organs, rarely deviating into landscape, or rather scraps of foliage, and even then what was meant for a tree resembled rather a drawing of the Vena Porta or Vena Cava, with its branching veins. This time, however, his subject was the human face, not dissected, but in its natural state; and as very commonly happens to artists, fine or unfine, the features took the form and expression of a countenance remotely present to his thoughts, so that without any premeditated portraiture, he had just achieved a rather striking but ugly likeness of Doctor Shackle, when a shadow fell across the paper, and looking up, he beheld the original of the picture standing right before him.

The Doctor was accompanied by a Mr. Hix, a parish official, and a very active one — but especially notable for a double propensity to turn private business into public, and public business into private — at once an indefatigable meddler in, and advertiser of, the personal concerns of his neighbors, and the uniform advocate of select vestries, secret committees, private reports, sealed books, suppressed accounts, the exclusion of reporters, and closed doors. Indeed, so far did he carry this love of mystery that, when certain parochial notices were to be posted, according to law, for the benefit of the community at large, he was said to have seriously recommended their being pasted up with their printed sides to the wall.

The ostensible errand of Doctor Shackle was merely to ask, in a friendly way, after the heads of the family, and how they had passed the night after the trying disappointments they had endured; an inquiry urged with such seeming interest, that in the absence of any authentic bulletin, Mr. Postle deemed it expedient to fetch my father himself to reply personally to the application.

His back was no sooner turned, than Shackle, reaching his long arm over the low rail in front of the desk, snatched up something which he exhibited to his companion — namely, a fragment of French gray cloth in one hand, and in the open palm of the other two silver-washed nails. The pantomime that followed was silent, but expressive.

"*Do you see these, and understand what they mean?*" asked the fixed, significant look of the Doctor, as plainly as in words.

"*I do,*" replied the intelligent nod of Mr. Hix.

The Doctor raised his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders. "*Could there be a clearer case?*"

The Churchwarden shook his head, and made a grimace. — "*Nor a more ugly business.*"

"I 'm sorry for it — very!" said Shackle, hastily replacing the cloth and nails on the desk, and then suddenly turning his back on them, and fixing his eyes on a large glass jar full of snow-white magnesian bricks, as if projecting how to build with them some castle in the air. So intensely, indeed, was he occupied with this ideal fabric, as not to be aware of the entrance of my father, till the latter came close up to him, and shook him cordially by the hand. Then he awoke, and how delighted he was, or said he was, to find my father not merely as well, but better than could have been expected, after the late untoward events — a series of disappointments borne, he must say, with an equanimity worthy of the palmy days of the Stoic Philosophy.

"Had it been my own case," said Shackle, "to say nothing of the dead convivial failure, yet to meet with such a slight from the whole neighborhood, as it were — the cut wholesale as well as direct — I really think, with my own more sensitive, irritable temperament, I should either have gone there," — and he pointed to the laudanum bottle — "for oblivion, or there" — and he indicated another drug — "for annihilation."

"No, no," said my father, "you know better. And besides, there was no great stoicism needed in the matter. A medical man, and a Christian, who had walked the hospitals and the poor-house, and seen human misery and anguish in all their complicated shapes, and who could not bear such a petty mishap — provoking as I confess it was — would be a disgrace to his profession and his religion. As to the absence of our friends, no doubt it will be accounted for."

"No doubt," said Dr. Shackle.

"For the rest," continued my father, "the worst we are threatened with is to be cloyed with sweets for a few days to come, or surfeited with cold victuals; evils for which between young folks and poor ones, we may easily find a remedy."

"I am glad to find you so well armed against trouble," said Dr. Shackle; "and wish I had a little of your philosophy. I have equal need of it — for we are likely to be mutually involved in a very disagreeable business."

"A parochial, and perhaps a public business," said Mr. Hix. My father looked inquiringly from one speaker to another.

"The short of the matter is this," said Dr. Shackle. "You have heard, of course, of the pauper family, who gave their dead child that ridiculous funeral? —"

"The Hobbeses," said Mr. Hix. "Indulged themselves with a genteel burial — and on our books for three shillings a week!"

"Yes, inconsistent enough," said my father. "I was accidentally an eyewitness of the procession."

"Well," said Shackle, "the grave was robbed the other night, and the child's body stolen. The whole village is in a ferment about it — the poor especially — the paupers outrageous, and the Hobbeses rampant."

"Poor things," said my father.

"Yes, poor enough," said Shackle; wilfully wresting my father's phrase of commiseration into another sense.

"And idle enough, and troublesome enough, and more than enough," added Mr. Hix.

"And scandalous enough," said Shackle, "to say that their beggarly corpses are less cared for than the carcasses of brute beasts."

"The coarse expression," said my father, "of a strong but natural prejudice."

"O, quite natural," sneered Dr. Shackle; "and quite harmless, if their prejudices went no further. But, as human corpses are not eaten, except by ghouls, hyænas, and beasts of prey, of which there are none in this blessed Lincolnshire, the natural inference is that graves are robbed, and bodies snatched for other than pantry purposes. In short, in their own low language, that the poor are only poked into pit-holes,

to be hoked up agin, and cut and hacked about like dog's meat, by raw 'prentices and Sawboneses, — and heaven knows what vulgar libels besides."

"Well, and what then?" asked my father. "As a surgeon, *you* are not going, I presume, to deny the practices of the resurrectionists, or the uses to which the articles they deal in are applied?"

"Not I," said Shackle. "The thing is too notorious; and, as you say, too surgical; though I never had, directly, a finger in any cold meat-pie of the kind. Probably, you have. However, the popular suspicion necessarily falls on the medical men of the place; under which category we share the odium between us: at least, *pro tempore;* for, as regards myself, as we doctors say, I shall very soon remove all that; and hope you are in as good case."

"Most decidedly," said my father.

"So much the better," said Shackle. "Your official connection with the poor, as parish doctor, makes your exculpation of even more importance than my own."

"There must be a parochial inquiry!" exclaimed Mr. Hix.

"Of course, with closed doors," said Shackle; unable to resist a sarcasm, even on a friend and ally — a propensity that explained his otherwise unaccountable influence in a place where so few persons liked, but so many feared him.

"In fact," he continued, "the wretches do not scruple to say that the anatomizing of their remains is winked at by the workhouse authorities."

"And if we did," cried Mr. Hix, "every ounce of flesh on their bones was composed of parish victuals. There is n't a pauper dies, man, woman, or child, but in equity we have a mortgage, as I may say, on their bodies."

"That 's undeniable," said Shackle. "However, the paupers are all up in arms, and declare openly that they won't work; and even that they won't die, unless assured of decent and safe interment."

"Won't die!" exclaimed Mr. Hix.

"So they say," answered Shackle.

"Won't die!" repeated the churchwarden. "That must be looked to."

My father, who had been lost in thought, here awoke from his reverie and addressed himself to Shackle.

"Yes, Doctor, you are right. This is a very disagreeable business, and a very serious one, at least for me."

"And for the parish too," said Mr. Hix, "to have such a slur on it."

"Especially," said Shackle, "as it is not a matter that can be shelved, or cushioned, or hushed up."

"And ought not to be," said my father, "must not! Last night's mystery is now solved. I am socially excommunicated. How or why, I know not, — but a suspicion has fallen upon me, which I must remove, or give up my practice, and quit the neighborhood. A public inquiry will be necessary, for my own sake."

"And for mine too," said Shackle.

"For all our sakes!" cried Mr. Hix. "The excitement of the lower orders will be sure to fall first on the authorities — the churchwardens and overseers. The least I expect is, to be hung or burnt in effigy, or to have my windows smashed!"

My father mechanically looked up over the surgery-door at the yellow glass globe, so often broken; and true to his misgivings, if not actually smashed, it was starred in all directions by some missile that had struck it in the centre. He pointed it out to his visitors.

"There is a token of the popular feeling — the local current that has set in against me. For some time past I have fancied myself treated with coldness and aversion by the humbler class of the inhabitants; but a clear conscience and my good-will towards them repelled the supposition. Now, however, there is a direct imputation on me which I must at once rebut, or be a ruined man."

"The Board sits this morning," suggested Mr. Hix.

"In that case," said my father, "I will at once go before it, and clear my character. I need not say, I hope, that I am altogether innocent in the matter — as innocent as those leeches" — and he pointed to the bottle — "of the blood of Julius Cæsar."

"I am truly happy to hear you say so," cried Shackle, seizing and squeezing my father's hand; "and shall be still more happy to hear you prove it."

The churchwarden expressed a similar wish, but instead of shaking hands, contented himself with a stiff bow, externally taking a simple leave of my father, but internally bidding

good by to him, though somewhat precociously, as the parish doctor. The real functionary, in his eyes, was the medical gentleman with whom he walked off arm in arm.

"A clew at last!" cried my father to Mr. Postle, whose entrance into the surgery was synchronous with the exit of Dr. Shackle — a hint that Animal Magnetism ought properly to have two poles, — of repulsive Antipathy as well as of sympathetic Attraction. "A clew at last! We have found out the disease!" And my father imparted to his assistant the substance of the information he had just obtained.

"Say I told you so!" cried the assistant; an exclamation he would have made, however, if just informed of a shower of addled brains from the moon. "And that, then, is why we were sent last night to Coventry — to sup by ourselves! Not that they would have touched the supper if they had come — they would have fancied human brains in the blanc-mange, and coagulated blood in the currant jelly. Yes — for the future we are ghouls, vampires, carrion vultures — and nobody will come near us. There is nothing that unscientific people are so squeamish about as violating graves and desecrating their remains — though why the suspicion should fall on us, more than on Doctor Shackle, he knows best. If any one wants a refresher in anatomy, he does. And what, sir, do you mean to do?"

"Confront the report," said my father. "Go before the Board and demand an inquiry. Is not that always the best course — to take the bull by the horns?"

"Perhaps so — except you're run at by a polled cow," answered Mr. Postle. "For my part I'd as soon go at once at Farmer Nokes's bull with a board over his eyes, with 'beware' upon it. It's the Board, or a parcel of it, that wants to get you out, and have Shackle in your place."

"I don't — I can't — I won't believe it!" cried my father.

"As you please," said Mr. Postle. "If *they* don't, the paupers will, which comes to the same thing. I know them well: when the poor once catch a prejudice in their heads, it's as obstinate as ringworm. I lost my own practice by it when I was a doctor on my own account. My patients were mostly provincials of the lower and middle class, but all brutally ignorant, and of course superstitious, and devout believers in witchcraft. And how do you think I lost them?

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By a joke, — sir, a mere joke — through telling a credulous old woman, — ass as I was! — that I could show her Mindererus's Spirit, dancing with Saint Vitus, round Saint Anthony's Fire!"

"But surely a jest," said my father, "might have been explained."

"Not it," said Mr. Postle. "To the vulgar, a doctor with his hieroglyphics on his bottles, and his Latin, is already half a conjurer, and I had made myself a necromancer outright. There was no revoking it. You may make an ignorant stomach give up its poison, but an ignorant faith never gives up a legend it has once swallowed."

"I should like to hear your definition of an ignorant stomach," said my father, straying, as he was too apt, from serious matters after a whim.

"We are likely to know practically," answered the assistant, in a gloomy tone, "if ignorance and emptiness be synonymous, as they are in the head; for I don't suppose, as the practice goes, that the Board will board us."

"That's true," said my father. "I must go to the workhouse." And with a smile at the unintentional equivoque, he put on his hat, and set out for the parochial meeting.

Had he delayed a minute longer, he would have been startled and stopped by a sound ringing in his own house from hall to attic, — that sudden, shrill cry which only comes from a female in distress, anguish, or alarm, — and electrifies the hearer like a flash of lightning turned from visible into audible. As it flew first from the kitchen to the surgery close at hand, Mr. Postle was soonest at the spot, where, close to the ironing-board, the movable supports of which she had knocked away in her fall, lay Kezia in a strong hysterical fit, in the middle of a chaos of crockery, glasses, decanters, knives, forks, tongue, cold fowls, tarts, salad, cakes, and jellies, — amidst which she kicked and struggled like a passenger desperately swimming, or trying to swim, from the wreck of some well-provisioned steamer.

Having dashed into her face the first water at hand, the assistant stepped back into the surgery for the Sal. Vol. or Liq. Vol. C. C., but with so much professional deliberation — knowing such fits may be safely left to run their course — that when he returned to the kitchen, he found the patient propped up

against the wall, in a sitting posture, between Mrs. Prideaux and Uncle Rumbold, the first loosening the sufferer's dress, and the last, having lent a hand in her removal, gazing calmly on, very like a bearded Turk confiding in Predestination, and still more like himself "trusting to Nature." Mr. Postle nevertheless plied the stimulants.

"One more application of the restoratives," said Mrs. Prideaux, "and she will revive. There! — she is resuming her senses."

As she spoke, the color began to return to the claret-bald cheeks of Kezia, who, after a gasp or two, opened her eyes — sneezed — stared at each person in turn, — then suddenly turned pale again — closed her eyes — clasped her hands wildly together — and shrieking "the plate! the plate!" relapsed into insensibility.

The restorative process was again applied, and with success. The maid-of-all-work, after a short struggle, sprang up, as if galvanized, on her feet; and amidst gulps, sobs, broken ejaculations, and distracted gestures, informed her audience by bits and snatches that "there had been thieves in the house, — and Mr. Ruffy's silver tankard — and the Reverend Curate's silver-gilt salts — and all Mrs. Trent's school spoons — were missing!"

Poor faithful, devoted Kezia! No hand had she in that felonious abstraction; and yet, for all her innocence, how fearfully within the range of suspicion, whilst Guilt stood by in comparative safety, without a tremor in her silvery voice, or a faltering in her correct carriage! Had some wakeful ear, startled by the unseasonable issuing of the housemaid from her bedroom, heard her descending the stairs, marked her passage from hall to surgery, from surgery to kitchen, and recognized, by listening, her voice in conversation though but with a shadow, and then her stealthy retreat before dawn to her own attic, she was in all human probability a lost, undone, ruined creature. Like other Somnambulists, who, in their nocturnal, unconscious wanderings, step, dream-led, on the narrow window-sill or perilous parapet, she had walked to the very verge of a moral precipice — would she keep her footing or fall?

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PARISH BOARD.

It was a sad journey, though a short one, for my father, from his home to the Workhouse. At every step he was painfully reminded of his position. In return for the ready smile and friendly greeting for everybody he met, he received only cold looks, and sullen or fierce replies. The very children, with whom he had been so popular, shrank from him inspired by the common prejudice: little heads, that used to nod to him, were immovable on their shoulders; little faces, that used to brighten at his approach, were frowning their aversion; not a few of the youngsters ran indoors as from the minister of a new Herod. And yet so innocent was he of the revolting act attributed to him, that he had yet to learn particulars which were known to almost every man, woman, and child in the place — that the grave of the little Hobbes had been reopened; the removed earth being placed, as the practice was in such operations, in a sheet, so that the mould might all be returned to its place without leaving a vestige to tell the tale of disturbance; but the resurrectionists had been alarmed at their work, and had decamped with the corpse, leaving the clay in the sheet, at one side of the yawning void, and the shattered coffin on the other.

To add to his discomfort, when my father arrived at the Workhouse, a number of applicants for out-door relief were in waiting at the gate; a squalid group, including the ungrateful Mrs. Hopkins, the bitter Mrs. Pegge, with her green shade, and the old deaf cripple, with her crutch and her ear-trumpet. As several of these persons were his patients, he inquired as usual after their complaints; but his questions were met by a dogged silence, or rude answers; whilst the three shrews were loud in their revilings, the deaf woman screaming high above the rest.

"Yes, ax 'em, do, poor things! when they mean to go to the pit-hole. And much rest they 'll get in it, — just earthed over at night, and dug out again afore morning; that 's all we enjoy of our narrow homes! Well, you 've snatched one at

any rate — poor Sukey Hobbes! Ay, you may shake your head — you did n't do it, — not you, — nor she is n't you know where, with her bones surgically picked into a skeleton, to stand behind a green curtain in a glass case. But, mark my words, — she 'll harnt ye some day! She 'll harn't ye in her little shrowd!"

My father rang the bell: the sliding panel in the gate moved aside; and a hard red face looked through the grating; but the porter still delayed to withdraw the bolt. He was an officer whose duty it was to admit rags and tatters, and as a character was being torn to shreds outside, he resolved to afford time for the operation. So the vituperation went on.

"Yes, go in to the Board, and hush and huddle it up among ye! It was not body-snatching — O no — poor paupers have not bodies, but only carcasses like brute beasts, so it was n't body-snatching at all! And if it was, who cares for the remains of the like of us? If we make away with ourselves, we 're mangled and mammoked with stakes through our corpses; and if we die nateral, we 're cut up like Haggerty and Holloway! Who did poor Sukey kill that she 's to be made a 'natomy? — But murderers is dissected, and so is paupers!"

The gate here opened; and my father entered, bestowing on the porter a gentle rebuke, that was received with a sneer, and revenged by leaving the panel open, so that as the Doctor crossed the yard he received through the grating a parting salute.

"Take care of John Hobbes, that 's all. If *he* comes nigh your body, he 'll snatch it alive!"

With these sounds ringing in his ears, my father entered the Workhouse; not unmarked by sundry dingy paupers, who were in waiting as messengers, and nodded and winked to each other, but omitted the customary tokens of respect as he passed them in the passage. Not a creature seemed to recognize him but the master's dog.

My father, for all his virtues, was not a favorite with the Board. In those days of general prosperity, and under the Old Poor Law, the expenditure for the maintenance of paupers was in many parishes very liberal, in some lavish; yet there were examples even then of a harsher spirit and sterner system; and in certain localities, the sole aim of the parochial authorities was to reduce the poor and their rates to the low-

est possible pitch. In our own district especially, the management of the Workhouse had gradually fallen into the hands of rigid utilitarians and strict economists, who were continually seeking to discover that minimum of support on which human life can subsist; and their rules, by augmenting labor and diminishing food, had already brought their Work Tables and Dining Tables to proportions that would have astonished an upholsterer.

My father, from natural disposition, was ill-adapted to second such views; and was, in the opinion of the authorities, an expensive doctor: he was too apt to prescribe wine and a generous diet for very reduced patients; and to recommend extra comforts in clothing, and improvements in lodging the poor. Moreover, his evidence at inquests on defunct paupers was not always exactly what could have been wished; and in one case had tended directly to induce a verdict of "Died from Neglect." He was therefore no favorite with the Board, who, as Postle suspected, had secretly encouraged the establishment of a rival doctor, in whose private opinion the milk of human kindness, to say nothing of the cream of it, was a luxury to be reserved for the wealthy classes. With the poor, on the other hand, my father ought to have been popular: but his good intentions towards them were nullified by orders that were disobeyed, and recommendations that were disregarded; he was supposed, by some, to drink the wine that did not follow his prescription, and when it did, that *he* changed the Port into Elder, and the Sherry into Raisin. Thus he was associated with all sins of omission and commission; and as one of the Parochial Body, shared in the general odium that attached to it. His kind manners indeed, his prompt attendance, tender treatment, and private charity, as far as his very limited means allowed, might have procured an exemption in his favor; but his decided opposition to the local and growing habit of opium taking, by the lower classes, had excited a discontent, sedulously fostered by the opposite practice and secret machinations of Shackle, into a dislike, which the imputed outrage in the churchyard had aggravated to abhorrence. And so — a Martyr Elect — my father entered the Boardroom, and placed himself in one of the vacant seats at its long table.

The senior churchwarden, Mr. Peckover, was in the chair;

supported on his right by Mr. Hix, who had lost no time in circulating the story of his visit to the Doctor's surgery, with the discovery of the scraps of French-gray cloth and the silver-washed nails — but ending with a recommendation to bury the matter in their own bosoms. There were present, besides, Mr. Bearcroft the overseer, Mr. Poplitt the assistant-overseer, Mr. Tally the vestry clerk, and a few more official gentlemen. The greater part of the business of the meeting had been already disposed of: several tenders had been accepted; a complaint against the Master and Matron, and another against the Porter, had been heard and dismissed; a retrenchment in the Dietary had been agreed to; and the last question, the better punishment of the refractory paupers, was under discussion. Bread-and-water and solitary confinement were soon decided on; and then came a pause. The Boardmen looked at each other, and at the Doctor, and then with one accord at the chairman; who rose, coughed, stammered, and proceeded to lay before them a very disagreeable business — the desecration of the churchyard, the violation of a grave, and the abstraction of a corpse — according to popular rumor — by their own medical officer. The gentlemen would no doubt recollect the remarkable funeral bestowed by one John Hobbes, a pauper on the parish books, on his deceased child, who was interred in an elegant coffin, covered with French-gray cloth, and richly ornamented with silvered nails? It was her grave that had been disturbed; and her body which had been stolen for anatomical purposes. He thought, with his friend on his right, such a slur ought not to rest on the parish and its officers. The Doctor himself, he understood, wished for an immediate inquiry. It would have been more regular, no doubt, to have given notice, but as he was present for the purpose, the Board would perhaps dispense with the form, and hear what he had to say on the subject."

This course being assented to, my father rose, promptly yet embarrassed, for the old difficulty of proving a negative reduced his eloquence to little more than an assertion.

"All I can say is, gentlemen, that I am an innocent man. As for any guilty knowledge of this matter, it was only this very morning — within an hour ago — that I knew of any grave being robbed, or any body stolen · my informants being Mr. Hix, there, and Doctor Shackle."

"Yet it was pretty widely known last night, before your christening supper," observed Mr. Poplitt, who had been one of the uninvited.

"The surer proof of my having nothing to do with it," replied my father, "that I was behind the whole parish in the information. That I was suspected, nay, condemned, was indeed signified to me, at the family festival just alluded to, in a very marked and painful matter — but it is only recently that I have become aware of the cause of that general desertion. On what grounds the charge is grounded it is impossible to divine; my long practical acquaintance with anatomy, in the schools and hospitals, and my professional knowledge, vouched for by the most eminent surgeons of the day, place me beyond the need of such studies of the human subject; and if I did require any aid from dissection, my principles publicly avowed, deprecate the exclusive application of the remains of the poor to purposes equally beneficial to the rich."

"That is true," said the Vestry Clerk. "I have heard the Doctor express that sentiment on various occasions."

"No doubt of it," said Mr. Poplitt; "but people's practice don't always square with their professions."

"Well, let me be judged by my practice then," said my father. "What have I ever done, as a medical man, that such a suspicion should fall on me rather than on any one else?"

"If you mean to glance at Doctor Shackle," said the Chairman, "I myself can speak to his alibi; for he was in close attendance on my wife, who was confined on the night in question."

"I glanced at nobody, Mr. Chairman," replied my father, "nor have an aim beyond my own exculpation. I repeat, that I knew nothing of the affair till this morning; and if you will send for my assistant, Mr. Postle, he will confirm my statement."

"Mr. Postle!" exclaimed half a dozen voices.

"Phoo! phoo! Doctor," said the Chairman, "you know better than that! In a little quiet bit of body-snatching for the surgery, assistant and accomplice are synonymous."

"So be it," said my father. "Postle had certainly quite as much to do with the matter as myself; and I was sound asleep in my own bed. But that rests, too, on domestic, and therefore, I presume, on questionable evidence."

"I think," said Mr. Poplitt, appealing to Mr. Hix, "you told us something about some French-gray cloth and silver-headed nails that were seen in the Doctor's surgery?"

"I did," replied Mr. Hix, looking rather confused; "but on the understanding that the communication was to be suppressed as strictly confidential."

"There is no need of suppression," cried my father; "the articles were taken from my basket-boy, Catechism Jack, who is weak of intellect, and had childishly adorned himself with them on the morning of the christening."

"A likely story!" mumbled Mr. Hix, in a tone between publishing and smothering the remark.

"And pray, Doctor, how did *your* boy become possessed of the cloth and nails?" inquired Mr. Poplitt.

My father was silent: he could not form the remotest guess; for he was still ignorant that the coffin had been left above ground by the marauders.

"Why, of course," suggested the Vestry Clerk, "the boy picked up the things in the churchyard —"

"Yes, when he were there delivering their sleeping draughts to the dead folks," said Mr. Bearcroft, the Overseer, with a grim smile. Mr. Hix bestowed an approving nod on the Overseer, and Mr. Poplitt cast a sneer at the Vestry Clerk.

"Perhaps," said a little withered man with a pigtail, an Auditor and Trustee, "we had better send for the lad and examine him?"

"It would be to no purpose!" exclaimed my father. "The poor creature is so timorous, that, if seriously interrogated, he would recur to his old laps, and nothing would be got out of him, except that he would be a good boy, and say his Catechism, and not tumble down stairs. However, gentlemen, the suspicion attached to that cloth and those nails extorts from me a confession which nothing else should have induced me to make" — and my father blushed, as if about to plead guilty to the charge against him.

Now, then, it was coming! Mr. Hix nudged his neighbor, and the Overseer winked across the table at Mr. Poplitt.

"It was I, gentlemen, resumed my father, in a faltering tone, "who supplied the Hobbeses with the means for that preposterous funeral." The Boardmen looked at each other, and interchanged signals of various import: brow-raisings of wonder, head-shakings of disbelief, and shrugs of doubt.

"If you mean the money chucked in at the Hobbes's door, or window," said Mr. Poplitt, "that gift has generally been attributed to Dr. Shackle."

"Universally so," said Mr. Hix.

"And might be still," replied my father, "if nothing but common humanity were in question. I trust the Doctor is as capable as I am of feeling for a bereaved father and mother. The deed is only claimed because it tends directly to contradict the charge that has fallen upon me. Were I capable," and the speaker's eyes filled with tears as he recalled the poor dead child, with her flowers and toys about her, as he had seen through the cottage-window — "were I capable of robbing a churchyard, *that* little grave would have been the very last on earth I should have dreamed of violating!"

This speech, emphatically delivered, with the air and tone of the deepest feeling, caused a visible sensation amongst the auditors: several seemed affected, and one or two looked foolish, the only softness of which they were capable; but the impression was transient.

"Why, as to that," said the burly overseer, "if the trick had been clearly done, the father and mother would have been never the wiser, while the purse may be, you considered in the light of purchase-money, like, for the body."

My father's face flushed, his eyes glistened, his lips quivered, and he was about to start up for some angry explosion, when the vestry clerk laid his hand on his arm, held him down, and rose in his stead.

"Mr. Chairman, allow me to propose that this business be dropped. There is much more mystery about it than we can hope to unravel except by course of time. As yet, we are all in the dark, and where there is a doubt we are bound to give the benefit of it to the accused, and to suppose him innocent, as in this case I honestly believe he is."

Mr. Hix, Mr. Poplitt, and Mr. Bearcroft, rose together; but the loud voice of the big overseer soon found itself in possession of the air.

"The benefit of the doubt! Ay, that 's very well for a legal friction, I should say fiction — but what 's to benefit us, the parochial authorities, if we connive at such doings to dead paupers, surrounded as we are by such a vast proportion of live ones, and uncommon audacious and refractory? Their excitement is awful."

"They will easily be pacified," said the vestry clerk. "Post a few handbills with a reward for the discovery of the offender — "

"When we have discovered him gratis!" growled Mr. Bearcroft. "Not a shilling, sir, not a shilling! The parish funds are not to be rewarded away in any such manner. The offender is before us, and his guilt or innocence ought to be established at once."

"By all means!" exclaimed my father; "it is for that purpose that I am here, — that every equivocal circumstance may be explained away or contradicted, before I visit another parish patient, or set my foot again in the Infirmary."

"I believe that is the general feeling of the Board," said the Chairman, stooping sideways to receive the communication which Mr. Hix was whispering into his ear. "We will come, therefore, to the point. Perhaps, Doctor, you can tell us the mark or marks on your family linen?"

My father started, and stared at what seemed so strangely irrelevant a question; but to a repetition of it, replied that he presumed the marks would be the initials of himself and wife, or G. E. B. with the number.

"And in what color?"

"Either red or blue — red to the best of my recollection."

The Chairman made a signal to a subordinate official who was in attendance, and delivered his order.

"Budge, produce the sheet to the Board."

Budge immediately proceeded to a cupboard in one corner of the room, and unlocking it, drew forth a large, strong sheet, soiled with clay, which he laid on the table, when it was eagerly inspected by the Boardmen, — and alas! there were the fatal signs, G. E. B., No. 4, worked with red marking-cotton in one corner!

The Vestry Clerk having satisfied himself of the fact by ocular inspection, sank back into his chair, violently striking the Minute Book before him with his open hand.

My father was petrified!

"In that cloth, gentlemen," said the Chairman, "the earth was deposited, which had been taken out of the grave, with a view to its being all returned to its place. The discovery of the robbery was made by the sexton, who reported it to me, and by my orders brought away the sheet, which has remained in the possession of Budge, under lock and key, ever since."

"A clear case! palpable! undeniable! a clencher! a settler!" resounded from different quarters of the room.

"Doctor," asked the Vestry Clerk, in an aside tone, "do you employ a laundress?"

"No," replied my father, with a sorrowful shake of the head, for he understood the drift of the question. "The washing is all done at home."

The Chairman, Mr. Hix, Mr. Bearcroft, and Mr. Poplitt were busily writing on strips of paper, which they passed across the table to each other. To judge by their looks and signals, the communications were generally approved; and some secret resolution having been passed by a succession of affirmative nods, they bent their eyes on the Doctor. He was gazing on vacancy, as a man gazes who seeks at once to comprehend the past, the present, and the future.

"Yes," he said, speaking half aloud to himself, "that sheet is certainly mine, though how it was obtained for such a purpose is an impenetrable mystery. I cannot pretend to fathom it. Time and Providence some day may clear it up — but now, and from me, an explanation is impossible. Gentlemen!" here he raised his voice; "you MUST think me guilty. The presumption is too strong against me, — the current of circumstances too violent to be stemmed by a simple though solemn denial. Hereafter the dark cloud that is hanging over me may disperse; and its shadow that now blackens me so deeply may pass away. In the mean time there is but one course for me to pursue. I cannot — I feel that I cannot — remain your medical officer any longer. The place is vacant. I will send my formal resignation as soon as I get home."

There was a dead silence of assent: nobody said, "Stop! — consider — take time!"

My father rose, and bowed to the Chairman, and the Board, and made a movement to shake hands with the Vestry Clerk, but observing no sign of encouragement, bowed to him too, and hurried out of the room.

The pauper messengers, who had learned the whole business by relays of listeners, made jeering comments as he passed through their lounging place — the Matron, whom he encountered in the passage, read in his face ere she arose from her courtesy, that he was disgraced, skipped aside into her parlor, and shut the door. Only the Master's dog still recognized

him with his old salutes, and trotting across the forecourt with him, licked his hand for the last time. The hard red-faced porter, the moment the Doctor emerged from the Workhouse, had set the gate as wide open as it would swing; my father passed through it, and it closed with a loud slam.

Perhaps in the whole course of his days his heart had never felt so heavy as it weighed on his way home. In his progress to the Workhouse, he had been shocked and grieved by the frequent manifestations of dislike, and the sad change he had suffered in the golden opinions of all sorts of people; but on his return, the same tokens were embittered by tormenting reflections of more domestic interest. His prospect in life, within the last hour, had altered materially for the worse; and particularly resembled a natural one that was often before him — the Fens on a bad day. The situation of Parish Doctor was attended, indeed, with little direct emolument. The fees were calculated on a scale that only allowed for moderate morbuses, reasonable rheumatisms, cheap agues, and very low fevers; and afforded little profit to a conscientious practitioner, who was not content, in treating a sick pauper, to do it very well for the price. But the parochial connection was valuable: and by his secession from the Board, he would lose as patients the churchwardens and overseers, their spouses and children. In short, he saw before him, very distinctly, a Wife, two dear Twins, and a household to support, but no clear prospect of that indispensable requisite,

A LIVELY-HOOD.

CHAPTER XIX.

AMONGST the minor difficulties of our perplexing family affairs, none was more puzzling than the communication of the robbery, or breaking the plate as Kezia called it, to my mother. She had slept all through the alarm of the discovery, and had risen, and was about to come down, quite unconscious that Fate, which had mixed up such a black dose for her over night, had prepared another bitter draught for her in the morning. That the revelation would kill her poor mistress stone-dead on the spot like a thunderbolt was broadly predicted by the weeping maid-of-all-work. Mrs. Prideaux anticipated that a very hysterical tendency might bring on a succession of fainting fits, and Mr. Postle compared the disclosure to imparting a blow to a packet of fulminating mercury.

At last Uncle Rumbold, in virtue perhaps of his likeness to a philosopher, undertook to deliver the evil tidings, and after some reflection determined to do it at the late breakfast which in my father's absence he was to enjoy *tête-à-tête* with my mother.

The task, nevertheless, was a nervous one for an inexperienced bachelor. A dozen times he stopped short in his meal, and clutching his beard in his hand — a trick he had in any case of perplexity — fixed his large speculative eyes on the face before him, asking himself will she scream? or go off in a fit? will her tea go the wrong way? will she choke with her muffin? or jump up and knock over the tea-urn? If she did not wear ligatures, thought he, I would not mind; but a woman wears so many bands and ties and laces, that when nature attempts a gallop in her veins she bursts a blood-vessel.

All this while he was eating an egg, out of which, all at once plucking the spoon he held it up, in a line with my mother's nose, and very solemnly exclaimed:

"Egad! my little fellow, it is well you did not go too!"

This opening, however, was a failure; my mother thought that the spoon had merely escaped being swallowed with one of those very large mouthfuls of food which her brother was

in the habit of bolting. He therefore tried another tack; and began, in his oratorical tone, as follows: —

"In former times, sister, there was a certain sect of philosophers who professed to endure the severest pain with the most perfect indifference."

"Yes," said my mother, "they swallowed melted lead, and washed their hands in boiling oil, and carried about red-hot pokers by the red ends, and allowed any of the company to satisfy themselves that the things were actually burning and scalding hot."

"I alluded to the Stoics," said Uncle Rumbold.

"And so did I," said my mother.

"Humph!" said Uncle Rumbold. "However, that was the Stoic doctrine; and the young Spartans were brought up in its principles. You remember the story of the Spartan boy who had a stolen fox under his cloak, and allowed the animal to gnaw away his bowels, rather than betray himself by crying out?"

"Ah! I see," said my mother, closing her eyes, and shuddering. "You want your two nevies to be brought up like young Stoics and Spartans — but what I call hardened little wretches."

"I was not thinking of my nephews at all," replied Uncle Rumbold. "In referring to the Stoic philosophy, what I wanted, sister, was to incite you to summon up your own fortitude."

"Then why did you not say so at once?" said my mother. "Is there anything the matter?"

"Of course there is," replied Uncle Rumbold, "or what occasion would there be for the Spartan virtue? But before you hear it, let me recommend to you to finish your breakfast."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed my mother, pushing away the tea, and toast, and egg, to which she had helped herself, "as if I could eat, with my heart in my mouth! I do wish you had kept it till George's return. He has ten times more fortitude than I have, — indeed it sometimes amounts to apathy. With his example before me, I might bear up against what might tempt me to stick myself with a breakfast-knife, or to run out and fling myself in the river."

"Well, I will wait," said Uncle Rumbold, "for my brother-in-law's return."

"O no, no, no," cried my mother; "I must hear it now. If there is one thing I cannot bear, it is suspense. Dear me! What can it be? Is it anything more about my poor supper party?"

"No," said Uncle Rumbold. "Though the origin of that cut by the neighborhood, as I have just learned from Mr. Pestle — or Postle — is an awkward affair too. In short, sister — but you must first solemnly promise me not to shriek, or faint away, or do yourself any mischief, or tip over the urn —"

"I won't! I won't!" reiterated my mother.

"Well, then, the silver plate —"

"The plate! I knew it was the plate!" exclaimed my mother, with difficulty suppressing the forbidden scream. But she had not promised anything about the bell, so she jumped up, and tugged at it till one bell-rope gave way with its blue and yellow rosette, and then she began jerking at the other.

Kezia answered the summons, — pale as a ghost.

"The plate — where 's the plate?"

The maid-of-all-work wrung her hands, and looked piteously at Uncle Rumbold.

"Where 's the plate, I say!"

Poor Kezia dropped on her knees with a *plump* that would have split any pans but those common brown ones, so hardened by frequent scrubbing, and with uncouth gesticulations referred her mistress to the gentleman with the beard.

"The truth is, sister," said Uncle Rumbold, "the plate — which was all borrowed I believe — has been fetched away in the night; but whether by the right parties is very doubtful."

"Thieves! — robbers!" gasped Kezia, in a hoarse whisper.

My mother had heard enough. Without speaking, she went and threw herself at full length on the horsehair sofa; whither Kezia, by a mode of progression familiar to housemaids that scour, shuffled after her on her knees. Uncle Rumbold, in the mean time, deliberately drew out his gold watch and gravely laid it on the breakfast cloth before him, determined to allow sorrow exactly five minutes of uninterrupted indulgence before he and comfort interposed.

Such was precisely the position of the parties in the parlor — the door of which Kezia had left open — when my father quietly entered!

If a domestic man is especially to be pitied, it is when after the rebuffs, conflicts, defeats, disappointments, affronts, losses, and crosses he has encountered abroad in his business, he returns baffled, tired, disgusted, dejected, to be indemnified by the comforts of home — and finds it desolate — that whilst the reptiles of that foul hag Adversity had been stinging, biting, hissing, and spitting at him in his path out of doors, others of the same malignant brood had been spawning and hatching on the household hearth. That was precisely my father's case. He stood wonder and thunderstruck — looking from Uncle Rumbold to Kezia, and from her to my mother, on the sofa, trying vainly to catch the purport of her broken exclamations.

"Brother-in-law — Kezia — Wife — what is the meaning of this?"

At the sound of his voice, my mother exchanged her recumbent for a sitting position, and began incoherently to inform him of the catastrophe.

"O George, George — we are ruined at last! We can never hold up our heads again in the place — never, never, never! What the curate will say — and what Mr. Ruffy may do, for he's a lawyer — and then that horrid Mrs. Spinks —"

"She had hern, ma'am! — she had hern!" cried Kezia — "for she carried it away under her shawl!"

"Thank Heaven for that!" exclaimed my mother, with extraordinary fervor. "*She* can't ride, then, on our necks!"

"In the name of common sense," said my father, appealing to his brother-in-law, "what is all this about?"

"Why, the house has been robbed," answered Uncle Rumbold, "and the plate carried off."

In making this abrupt communication, the Philosopher had reckoned on the cheerful, manly, and generally sanguine disposition of my father, whom he was surprised therefore to see turn pale and stagger into a seat. But the Doctor's spirits were unusually jaded and depressed by the trial they had so recently undergone, and made him keenly sensible of a loss, which he felt bound to make good; but yet knew to be an impracticable obligation, in the present hopeless posture of his affairs.

"Yes, it really is a heavy trouble, is n't it, George?" said

my mother. "No wonder I felt it deeply, when you take it to heart so seriously. But what is to be done?"

"Ought n't we to raise the hue and cry, and print handbills, and offer a reward for the stolen plate?"

"Turned into white soup by this time!" said Uncle Rumbold. "Melted down almost into a state of nature. All we can do is to report the robbery to the next magistrate, and leave him and his myrmidons to find the thieves, if they can. As the Doctor is tired, and may be wanted, I will step down myself to his Worship: but before I go, I should like to know, brother-in-law, the upshot of the body-snatching story of which Mr. Pestle or Postle has given me the heads — and the result of your visit to the Board."

"The result is simply," said my father, "that I am no longer the Parish Doctor."

At this announcement there was a general expression of surprise, the exclamatory "We an't!" of Kezia ringing high above all.

"But how, George?"

"On what grounds, brother-in-law!"

"To be candid," said my father, "though some of the members of the Board were less friendly than I expected, they had sufficient grounds, founded on circumstantial evidence, to go upon — that the mould cast out of the poor child's grave was deposited in one of my own sheets."

"One of our own sheets!" screamed my mother.

"Our sheets!" echoed Kezia.

"Yes; I saw it produced," said my father. "It was marked G. E. B. No. 4, with red cotton."

The description was no sooner complete, than, after a collision that made our bearded uncle reel like a classic Bacchanalian, Kezia dashed out of the parlor, and was heard racing up the stairs at a horse-gallop.

"We shall soon know if any of the linen is deficient," said my mother. "For Kizzy is very careful of it, and that it is worn fairly, turn and turn about."

"I wish she had been more careful of the plate," growled Uncle Rumbold, "instead of trusting to country fastenings — a thin deal shutter, and a strong oaken bar.

"Did the thieves break in, then, at the kitchen window?" asked my father.

"If they broke in anywhere," muttered Uncle Rumbold, "which his Worship's two-legged ferrets must determine;" and our godfather was setting out on that errand, when he was delayed by the return of Kezia, with the result of her search on her lips and in her face. The household linen was all correct, with the exception of the identical sheet in question, which was missing, though she remembered marking it, as described, with her own hands. Our godfather immediately left the room, and the next minute his bearded profile, surmounted by a very broad-brimmed hat, was seen to pass above the blind of the parlor-window.

My father and mother, released from the restraint which all persons felt more or less in the presence of our strange uncle, immediately became confidential; the first relating what had taken place at the Workhouse, and the last commenting bitterly on a mass of trouble, not spreading itself fairly like a flood on the Flats, but discharging itself, like a terrific waterspout she had lately read of in the county paper, on one devoted house and family.

Kezia, meanwhile, repaired to her old post beside the desk in the surgery, to derive comfort and counsel from Mr. Postle; and was about to reveal to him the mysterious disappearance of the fatal sheet, when she perceived that a very little woman, with a straw-colored face, was shivering in the patient's chair. The influence of old habits instantly took possession of her.

"Ah! a case for chinchony. My good woman, you've got the ha-gue, and I should say the stertian. You must take bark; and the best form is in canine pills."

"No, no," said the woman; "I'm weary of that old dose. I've took bark enough to turn me into a holler tree. But I'm not come about myself, but my sister, who is troubled about her legs — she has such very coarse veins."

"Has she any occasion to be showing her legs?" inquired Kezia, not a little puzzled by the novelty of the complaint.

"Pshaw! she means varicose veins," said Mr. Postle.

"Yes, so I suppose," said Kezia. "It's very kind of her, I'm sure, to come to us, instead of Doctor Shackle, after all the falsities that has been spread about us, and has gone thro' the parish like an infection of a malignant nature — "

"She was interrupted by the entrance of Uncle Rumbold,

who swept through the surgery like a bearded meteor, with the parish constable in his vortex, in which, by an imperative beckon, he involved the maid-of-all-work, who was hurried along with them into the parlor.

"Dear me!" exclaimed my mother, "what is all this, brother? Who is that strange gentleman with the paper?"

"I am the Constable, ma'am, at your service," said the stranger, referring to the document in his hand; "and this here is a sarch warrant, for sarching the box or boxes of one Kezia Jenks."

"Mine!" faltered Kezia, — who, like many very innocent persons, had nevertheless a most intense dread and awe of the law, and all that belonged to it. "Mine!"

"I do wish, brother-in-law," said my father, in a tone of the deepest vexation, "I do wish you had been less precipitate! What has this faithful, devoted, hardworking, and affectionate creature done, that she should be affronted by suspicion, and have her character tarnished by such a proceeding? I would pledge my life for her honesty."

"I know you would!" replied Uncle Rumbold, "and therefore acted without consulting you, on my own judgment and responsibility. But I do nothing without grave deliberation; no man does, who wears this — and he touched his beard. "Listen. In the dead of the night, with my own ears I heard your paragon of fidelity open her chamber-door, and proceed stealthily down stairs, where, by listening over the banisters, I heard her voice, which I can swear to, in conversation with some person or persons unknown. The words I could not distinguish. — Silence, woman, and let me proceed —"

But Kezia was not to be silenced; but dropping on her knees, appealed to Heaven, and her master and mistress, to testify to her innocence.

"I was only sleep-walking, —which I have done afore, in this house, and other places besides, — being my misfortune, and such as will kill me, some day, off a parapet, or out of a window — as there is a judge in Heaven, it was only sleep-walking! And I waked up in the kitchen, by stumbling over the cold supper things, with my face on an 'am."

"A pretty story!" said Uncle Rumbold — echoed by his satellite, the constable.

"But a true one," said my father. "The poor girl is, to my knowledge, a somnambulist."

"A bamboozleist!" exclaimed Uncle Rumbold. "If you believe in such fables, brother-in-law, I do not — and never will. They 're contrary to nature. And the spoons walked off too in their sleep! Bah! Then you will not allow her box to be searched?"

"I will NOT," said my father.

"In that case," said Uncle Rumbold, "I shall remove my own person and property from the premises."

My mother looked horror-struck; yet not more so than her housemaid, as deeply interested in the hopes, for the dear twins, that hung on the smiles and frowns of Godfather Rumbold.

"O pray, pray," she sobbed, "don't quarrel and differ about me. I'm not worth it, whatever becomes of me. O Master — consider those dear, precious, innocent twins. Let my box be searched — I want to have it searched — it will do the things good to give them a fresh airing!"

"You had better, George," whispered my mother, with a twitch at my father's sleeve, — "there will be nothing found in it."

"Well — I wash my hands of it!" cried my father, — and the company in a body proceeded up stairs to the attic landing, whither Kezia's box, that she kept in her bedroom, was lugged and ransacked. And never did searcher, legal or fiscal, expose such a heterogeneous medley of articles, of so little intrinsic value! A few clothes — scraps of ribbon, and fragments of patchwork — bits of dried orange and lemon-peel, various ha'penny ballads, and last dying speeches, with one solitary play-bill — a Moore's Almanack, and a Dream-Book — keepsakes innumerable — locks of hair, of all colors, folded up in papers inscribed with female names, and one long silver tress, labelled "My deer Muther's," — with a date, — a red leather heart pin-cushion — several double nuts — a reel-in-a-bottle — and a little bone needle-case, in the shape of a closed umbrella, with a paper tied to the handle, "*Presented me by Mister Postle*," — an old-fashioned wooden spice-box, and last, not least, a yellow canvas sampler, with its worked alphabets and numerals, and Adam and Eve and the Apple Tree, and Kezia's own name, and the date at the bottom. On the whole, the impression produced by the exhibition was decidedly in favor of the honesty of the proprietor — that she was

disinterested, and affectionate, somewhat superstitious, and had one more grain of romance than was suspected in her homely composition.

"Well, I've sarched many a sarvant's box in my time," said the constable, "and I never come across a more innocenter one than that!"

As the party returned down stairs, they were met at the door of the nursery by Mrs. Prideaux, who, dropping a very lady-like courtesy to Uncle Rumbold, tendered a bunch of keys on a steel ring. She was in that house, she said, a hired nurse, and so far in the capacity of a servant, and therefore begged to submit her boxes to inspection. But Uncle Rumbold as politely declined the offer: he had had quite enough of searching, and had become irksomely indebted in an apology to the maid-of-all-work; for he was a proud man in his way, and of all the things that disagreed with his stomach, none was more indigestible than the proverbial Pasty of Humility,

HUMBLE PIE.

CHAPTER XX.

OUR LUCK.

Our Uncle Rumbold, though fierce of aspect and manner, was not absolutely hard-hearted; and his pride relented considerably when he saw the maid-of-all-work come down stairs, with her eyes red and swollen with weeping. But his apologies were disclaimed. "It was n't the searching her box," she said, "she did n't mind that, nor the being suspected, that made her cry, but the sight of her dear mother's hair, who died, poor soul! of a bilious calculation."

"Calculus," said my father, "calculus. But come, brother-in-law, let us inspect the premises, and have the constable's opinion of the burglary."

The trio accordingly repaired to the kitchen, where they minutely inspected the window and its fastenings, from which it appeared that a piece had been cut out of the shutter, so as to allow of the removal of the bolt, the sill was scratched and soiled with clay, and the ground, on the outside, bore in several places the imprint of a man's shoe or boot, thickly studded with hobnails. There was no doubt of the manner in which the entrance had been effected; and the parties having come to an unanimous conclusion on the subject, the constable was despatched to take the necessary steps for the discovery and apprehension of the offender or offenders. Uncle Rumbold undertook to order the printing and issue of the handbills, whilst my father, with a heavy heart, proceeded to his escritoire in the parlor, with a task before him which, to a man who disliked letter-writing in general, was a heavy infliction — seeing that he had to indite three several epistles, all on subjects of the most painful and disagreeable nature, namely, to the Board, with his resignation of office; to Mr. Ruffy, communicating the fate of his presentation tankard; and to the curate, conveying the loss of the silver-gilt salts. It would have moved a heart of nether millstone to have seen how he spoiled pen after pen, and sheet after sheet of paper, vainly turning his eyes for inspiration from the mirror, with its bird and ball, to the ceiling or the floor, the wall or the window,

the poplar-tree, and the blue sky. O, if my father ever envied a rich or great man, it was then, just then, for the sake of his private secretary!

To add to his distress, his usual resource in such emergencies was unavailable. In reply to his application for help, Mr. Postle had excused himself, under the pretence of urgent business in the surgery; but, in reality, the assistant was indisposed with a fit of spleen. He had heard of the affair of the search-warrant; and after indignantly asking of the jar of conserve of roses why Mrs. Prideaux had not been suspected instead of Kezia, had solemnly promised the pestle and mortar to pluck old Rumbold, at the very first opportunity, by the beard — a threat he would probably have put into execution but for a positive injunction from the injured maid, who overheard him pledging himself to the same effect to the bottle of leeches.

"No, Mr. Postle," she said, "you will do no such thing. It's a heathen fashion, to be sure, and makes him look more like a satire of the woods than a Christian: but when you consider what hangs on it, namely, the future prospects in life of our poor, helpless, innocent twins, you 'll respect his beard as if it belonged to Moses or Aaron. As for my being suspected, it comes natural to a servant, and, like a part of her work, to clear up her character sometimes, as well as her kitchen: and as regards the searching of my box, it's nothing to the rummaging of one's thoughts and feelings, which I have had to undergo in other places. But so long as master, and missis, and you don't suspect me, I can bear it from any one else. So, for the sake of the dear twins, you must let the matter drop, and not offend Mr. Rumbold by look, or word, or deed, and especially by touching his beard, which would be cutting off young heirs with a shilling."

Having extorted a promise to this pacific effect, Kezia repaired to the nursery, where she relieved her full heart and excited feelings by a good cry and a hearty fondling of the precious babes. But, beyond this solace, she had a secret project of her own, in accordance with which she addressed herself to the genteel nurse.

"O, Mrs. Prideaux, is n't it a shocking thing to see a family like ours, for no fault of their own, coming step by step, deeper and deeper into misfortune and misery! First, that

dreadful supper, and then the robbery, and then the loss of the parish — it reminds me of one of my own runs of bad luck, when first I was knocked down by a runaway horse, and then picked up by a pickpocket, and then sent home in a hackney-coach that had just carried a patient to the hospital with a putrid fever."

"The planets," said the nurse, "are decidedly sinister."

"Then you think," said Kezia, delighted with the astrological turn of the conversation, "that it is our ill stars are in fault?"

"Of course," said the nurse. "The aspects of the planets, at this juncture, and as affects this house, are particularly malignant."

"They must be, indeed!" said Kezia, with a melancholy shake of her head. "According to the Almanac, their bad influences affect sometimes one part and sometimes another, and at different times; but here they are, as I may say, smiting us back and belly, hip and thigh, all at once!"

"The natural effect," said the nurse, "of the planetary configurations, and especially of the position of Saturn."

"Ah! with his ring!" exclaimed Kezia. "Mr. Postle once showed him to me through his refractory telescope."

"A refracting one, I presume," said the nurse.

"I believe it was," said Kezia; "and it brought down the moon till it looked as big as a silver waiter. Talking of which reminds me of the stolen plate; and which it is my private notion that you know as much or more about than any one else."

"That *I* do!" exclaimed the nurse, with a slight start, and fixing her keen eyes on the face of the maid-of-all-work as if she would read her very soul. "That I know who stole the plate!"

"Yes," said Kezia, "by means of the heavenly bodies. I have heard of many persons recovering their lost things through star-gazers and fortune-tellers; and of course, as you can cast nativities, *you can do the other.*"

This was the very point at which she had been aiming; but the answer of the nurse put an extinguisher on her hopes.

"Between ourselves," she said, "I have cast some figures on purpose; but there is a mystery in the matter that defies my art."

"The more's the pity," said Kezia; "for I made sure that you could discover the thief. And then that lost sheet, as was found in the churchyard, — how it was abstracted from a press to which nobody but ourselves had access: I own to thoughts, and suspicions, and misgivings about it, that make me shudder!"

"Then do you really suppose," asked the nurse, "that your master was guilty of stealing the dead child?"

"The Lord forbid!" exclaimed Kezia. "I would as soon suspect him of kidnapping live ones for the Plantations! No, I was not thinking of him, but of a treacherous, deceitful being, whom to think of under the same roof, and in the same room with one, makes my very blood in a curdle."

The nurse again fixed one of her scrutinizing looks on Kezia; but the latter was thinking of quite another personage, as implied by her next question.

"What is your real opinion, Mrs. Prideaux, of supernatural agency?"

"The same as your own," was the prompt answer of the nurse.

"In that case," said Kezia, "I don't mind saying it's my belief that our sheet was purloined away by Satan himself, whose delight is in casting down the good and the godly, and for the express purpose of ruining my poor master."

"It is quite possible," said the nurse, who seemed to take delight in pampering the credulity of her simple-minded and single-hearted companion. "Such an act would be perfectly in unison with the diabolical character. My belief coincides with your own. But remember, Kezia, the age is a sceptical age, and its infidels especially repudiate astrology and demonology; so that the less we say of our own convictions the better. Indeed, it would cost me my bread were it known that I had cast the nativity of these dear twins."

"But it never shall be," cried Kezia, — "never! Do you think I would break the solemn oath you made me take on the Testament?"

"No — I know that you would not," said the nurse, in her sweetest tone; "for if you did, there are lightnings to burn your body, and other fires to scorch your soul for the perjury." And so the conference ended.

My father, meanwhile, had toiled on at his irksome task in

the parlor — blotting, blundering, erasing, correcting, tearing up, and beginning *de novo*, in a way that a corresponding clerk would have gone crazy to witness; for if my parent's sustenance had depended on the exercise of his pen, he must have died of starvation. At last, after infinite trouble, he had completed the whole of the missives, and was just in the act of drawing that long sigh of satisfaction with which a weary man is apt to hail the accomplishment of his labor, when my mother entered the room, drew a chair beside him, seated herself, and laid her hand on his arm. There was nothing in her face to indicate any interruption of the mental repose and relief which my father had promised himself; her looks were as cheerful as the tone with which she uttered her preluding monosyllable.

"George!"

"My dear!"

"Can you forgive me for keeping from you a little secret?"

"Of course I can," replied my father, with his old smile. "But will your own sex for being so unwomanly?"

"No matter for them," said my mother. "I meant to have hoarded it up for an agreeable surprise; but with such troubles as have come upon us, it seems only fair that you should share in any comfort which I am enjoying myself. You remember the 20 *l.* note that you gave me last week?"

"Yes — for Mr. Lobb."

"Ah, Mr. Lobb must wait a bit," said my mother. "That note went quite a different way, and for another purpose. Up to London, George, and for a purchase. "Can you guess?"

"For winter clothing, perhaps," said my father, "or a fresh stock of household linen."

"For winter wealth, George," said my mother, "and a stock of good luck. What do you think of a lottery ticket?"

My father made no reply — he was confounded by this new blow.

"Do you hear, George?" cried my mother, — "a lottery ticket!"

"Yes, twenty pounds gone," murmured my father.

"But they are not gone!" said my mother.

"As completely," said my father, "as if the note had lighted a candle. The last money in the house, too, and which ought to have paid the butcher. That accounts, then, for Lobb's insolence about the tainted mutton."

"Well, well," said my mother, "we shall soon get rid of Lobb after the drawing. The ticket is sure to come up a prize."

"I wish it may!" said my father.

"It is sure to come up a prize," repeated my mother, "for I dreamt three times running of the number."

My father jumped up from his seat, and after pacing a few turns up and down the room, suddenly stopped short and addressed himself to himself in the mirror.

"If ever there was a minister deserved impeachment — if ever a chancellor of the exchequer who ought to have lost his head on the block — it was the man who first invented a mode of raising money by the encouragement of public gambling!" He then turned abruptly to my mother, and inquired whether the ticket was registered.

"Yes, and the lottery was to be drawn on the 16th."

"And this is the 18th," said my father.

My mother instantly started from her seat, and rang the bell, to know if the post had come in, and whether there were any letters.

"Yes, one," which Kezia had laid on the kitchen shelf, where, in the unusual bustle of the morning, it had been forgotten. It was addressed to my mother, who seized the letter, broke the seal, glanced over the contents, and dropping the paper from her hand, sank, gasping, on the sofa — the blankness of her face sufficiently indicating the nature of the intelligence.

"Then the money is gone!" exclaimed my father.

My mother sobbed, and covered her face with her hands; Kezia wrung her's in mute despair. Our evil stars were verily shooting ones, and were practising on our devoted family as at a target!

"Well, what is this new disaster?" inquired the voice of Uncle Rumbold, who had just entered the parlor, but stopped short at two paces from the door, clutching his beard in his right hand.

"Nothing, nothing," replied my father, forgetting his own vexation in the affliction of my mother — "only a lost bank-note."

"What, another robbery?"

"No," replied my father, "thrown into the fire — blown out of window — washed down the sink — a mere trifle."

"A trifle!" exclaimed my mother, unwilling to forego any benefit to be derived from her brother's sympathy — "our last twenty pounds in the world — intended to pay the butcher."

But her indirect appeal had no effect. Liberal of advice and personal exertion, Uncle Rumbold, from habit and inclination, was slow in drawing his purse-strings. The amount, he admitted, was no trifle; but sometimes a loss became a gain in the end, by teaching those who had neglected their twenties to take care of their fifties. This new misfortune, however, seemed gradually to touch him, for shortly afterwards, having deliberately seated himself, he addressed his unlucky relatives as follows: "Sister, I have been thinking over your various troubles, and have come to the conclusion, brother-in-law, that, what with your loss of the parish appointment and other drawbacks, your affairs are, or soon will be, in anything but a prosperous condition. Such being the case, I feel called upon, as a near relative, to step a little beyond my original intentions for the family benefit, and especially as regards my twin nephews, though I trust I have sufficiently testified my regard for them already by that invaluable present, the Light of Nature. However, as I said before, I have determined to stretch a point, but on the condition that what I do shall be done in my own way."

"I am sure," said my mother, "we shall be truly grateful for your kindness in any way."

"I am not so certain of that," replied Uncle Rumbold: "however, what I propose is this, — to relieve you altogether of the care and maintenance of one of those two boys. As soon, therefore, as my godson can run alone, I am ready to adopt him; to board, lodge, and educate — in short, to provide for him through life at my own cost and charge, and of course according to my own system and views."

Here he paused, expecting an answer, whereas his proposition was met by a dead silence. My father, taken by surprise, was at a loss what to say, and my mother looked absolutely aghast. She had not forgotten certain features of the system alluded to, and in her mind's-eye saw her poor offspring, now climbing a tree for his food, at the risk of his neck, and now thrown dog-like into a river, to sink or swim as might happen — in short, undergoing all the hard discipline associated with a young Indian savage, or child of nature.

"Humph! I see how it is," said Uncle Rumbold; "but I do not press an immediate answer. Perhaps you will make up your minds before my departure. I have ordered a chaise at five o'clock, which will carry me to Wisbeach, where I shall meet the coach; — no words; my arrangements once made are never altered, and, let me add, my offers once refused are never repeated."

So saying, he rose and walked off to make his preparations for his departure; whilst my mother took the opportunity of expressing her sentiments to her helpmate on the godfatherly offer.

"No, I never will consent to it," she said, — "never, never! To have a child of mine climbing trees, and swimming ponds, and sleeping in the open air, like a gypsy, or Peter the Wild Boy! And taught bird's-nesting and tomahawking and all sorts of savage tricks, instead of the accomplishments of a young gentleman — and, at any rate, dressed up more like a Guy Fawkes than a Christian — and with a beard, when he 's old enough, like a Jewish rabbi, — O, it would break my heart, it would indeed, George! to have a boy of mine begin the world with such a prospect before him!"

"Well, well," said my father, "so be it. I am as loath as you are to have a son of mine bred up into a bearded oddity, like his uncle, or old Martin Van Butchell. So go and see to the dinner, and in the interim I will invent the best excuse I can to offer to my redoubtable kinsman."

Thus comforted, my mother applied herself to the arrangement of the dinner, which, thanks to what Kezia called the "supperfluities" of the night before, presented an unusual variety and profusion of the delicacies of the season. The meal, nevertheless, passed off very drearily. The spirits of the presiding pair were weighed down by the communication they had to make, and the certain resentment that awaited their decision; whilst the temper of Uncle Rumbold himself was still ruffled by a short but sharp argument on somnambulism with Mr. Postle in the surgery. The conversation, such as it was, had flagged into silence, when the post-chaise drew up at the door.

"Now then, sister," cried Uncle Rumbold, rising from his seat, "now then, brother-in-law, for your ultimatum. Am I to have the boy or not?"

"Why then, brother," began my mother, but her voice failed and died away in an articulate croak.

"The truth is," said my father, "we are deeply sensible of your kindness, and sorry to decline it. If the children had not been twins, we might have felt and decided otherwise; but we really cannot find in our hearts to separate, so early in life, a pair of brothers, that nature herself has so closely united."

"That's enough!" said Uncle Rumbold. "A plain offer has met a plain refusal — no offence on either side; but, by my beard, if ever I offer to adopt a child again —" What followed was inaudible or suppressed: he hastily shook hands with his relatives, and hurried into the gaping vehicle, wherein he threw himself back, as if determined on sulks and silence. In another moment, however, his face and beard appeared at the open window.

"God bless you, sister," he said; "brother-in-law, God bless you, — though how you are to be blessed, is more than I know, for you will never be guided by the light of nature!"

Every word of this leave-taking was overheard by Kezia, who with outstretched neck and straining ears listened eagerly for his least syllable. But those words were his last, — not a breath about the dear twins, his own nephews. The whip cracked, the horse-shoes clattered, the wheels rattled, and the few boys who had assembled set up a cheer for the Grand Mogul. The last chance was gone. In another minute, the black and yellow body, which contained Uncle Rumbold, was out of sight; and with it vanished, alas! all the hopes that he had engendered!

CHAPTER XXI.

A DEMONSTRATION.

"So much for relatives!" said my mother, as she poured out the tea, and handed a cup of the beverage to my father. "My precious brother, who would not shave off a hair of his

beard for love or money, will now cut off his own nephews without a scruple!"

"Nothing more likely," said my father.

"Do you really think then," inquired my mother, "that he will leave them quite out of his will?"

She waited in vain for an answer; and at last obtained, in lieu of it, another query, far wide of her mark. Throughout his troubles and vexations, my father's mind had been haunted by a vague sense of a something amiss; but his thoughts had always been diverted elsewhere before his fears could assume a definite shape; now, however, his misgivings, after many gleamings and vanishings, suddenly recurred to him, and taking a distinct character prompted the abrupt question—"Where is Catechism Jack?"

Nobody knew. In the crowding events of the day he had not been missed; there had been no medicine to deliver, so that his services were not in requisition, and even Mr. Postle could not tell what had become of him. On comparing notes, he had not been seen by any one since an early hour in the morning, when he had slipped out at the surgery door.

Here was a new cause of anxiety for my father; if any mischance happened to the idiot, the blame in the present temper of the parish was certain to be visited on the master, who had taken the half-witted boy from the care of the old dame, and become responsible for his safety and welfare. Many were the conjectures that were hazarded on the cause of his absence. In my father's opinion, Jack had gone on a visit to his former guardian, and was spending the day with her: my mother, prone to dream of disasters, at once pronounced him drowned in the river; Kezia's fancy sent him tramping after a recruiting party which had passed through the village; and the assistant supposed that he was playing truant and chuck-farthing with other young dogs as idle as himself. The last guess was most probably the true one; however, in the midst of their speculations, his voice was clearly recognized, and in another moment Jack, in an unusual state of excitement, burst into the parlor, round which he pranced with a sort of chimney-sweep's caper, exclaiming with ecstasy, "The tongs and bones! The tongs and bones!"

"Why, Jack," asked my father, "what is the matter with you?"

"The tongs and bones," said Jack, standing still for a moment and then resuming his dance and his song.

"Speak, idiot!" cried Mr. Postle, seizing the boy by the shoulder and shaking him. "What is the meaning of this mummery?"

"O don't, pray don't beat me," whined Jack. "I will say my catechism."

"Poor fellow!" said my father. "Be gentle with him."

"Huzza! The tongs and bones!" shouted Jack, extricating himself by a sudden twist from the grasp of the assistant; and darting through the parlor-door, and across the hall, into the kitchen, to the infinite horror of Kezia, who really believed, as she declared afterwards, that the boy had been bitten by "a rapid dog." Here he continued his capering and his cry; till observing the table with food on it, by one of those abrupt transitions common to weak intellects, his thoughts fastened on a new object; and at once subsiding into his usual demeanor, and seating himself at the board, he asked Kezia to give him his supper. The maid-of-all-work immediately complied; and as after some minutes he continued to eat and drink very quietly, Mr. Postle returned to the surgery and my parents to the parlor.

"The tongs and bones," muttered my mother as she resumed her seat at the tea-table, "what on earth can it mean?"

"Why, I suspect it means," said my father, "that the tag-rag and bobtail of the village have been treating some quarrelsome couple with what is called rough music; and Jack has been present, and perhaps performing at the concert."

This explanation was so satisfactory to both parties, that Jack and his chorus were speedily forgotten; and the pair had resumed their quiet, confidential intercourse, when Mr. Postle entered, with an ominous face, and placed in my father's hands something which he said he had just found upon the counter. It was a scrap of dirty, coarse paper, folded note-fashion, and containing only the following words: "Let the Dockter and Fammily keep in Dores to nite And look to yure Fastnings. A Frend."

"Well, and what do you make of this document?" asked my father.

"That it is what it professes to be," answered the assistant, looking uneasily at my mother, as if embarrassed by her pres-

ence. — "I will put the thing technically. There is, you know, sir, a certain local epidemic in the parish, of a very malignant type, and attended with extensive irritation. Now this party intends to say that probably there will be an eruption."

"I understand," said my father, with a nod of intelligence — "but doubt very much if the disease will take that active turn."

"There is no doubt at all," said Mr. Postle. "I know a party who has been round amongst the infected, on purpose to feel their pulse; and the symptoms are of a most unfavorable character. For instance, tongue hot — breath acrimonious and offensive — voice loud and harsh — with the use of expressions bordering on furious mania."

"A mere temporary fever," said my father, "that will pass off without any dangerous paroxysm."

"I wish it may," said Mr. Postle, "and without a nocturnal crisis."

My mother's head during this mysterious discussion had turned mechanically from speaker to speaker, as if moved by internal clock-work; but she could gather no more information from their faces than from their words; and as the consultation might be a long one, and she hated medical matters, she briefly intimated to my father that she should go up-stairs to the children, and left the room.

"And do you really suppose," asked my father, "that there is going to be any disturbance or outrage? Phoo, phoo — I can't and won't believe it."

"So you said of the hostility of the parish Board," retorted the assistant.

"Well, well, do as you please," said my father. "I leave the matter entirely in your own hands."

"In that case," said Mr. Postle, "I shall at once lock all the doors, and secure the lower windows, and this one to begin with;" — and accordingly he pulled up the sliding parlor-shutter, and inserted the screws. "Now then for the others."

"Very good," said my father, "and then come to supper with us in the parlor. Poor Postle," he continued, as the assistant departed to look to the household defences, "he was always an alarmist, and I'll be bound expects the premises to

be stormed and sacked, on the strength of an anonymous letter, intended, most probably, to play upon his fears."

True to his plan, the alarmist, meanwhile, proceeded from window to window, and from door to door, locking, bolting, barring, screwing; the surgery door alone, for convenience, being left but partially fastened by a single latch, which, however, could only be raised on the inside. The fanlight above he barricaded with a stout board; and ascertained, shutter by shutter, that the defences of the window were all sound and secure. He then took a final peep at Jack, who was still quietly making an interminable meal in the kitchen; and finding all safe, repaired to the parlor, and took his usual place at the supper-table; not without some bantering from my father as to the preparations in a certain fortress for a state of siege, and the strength of its garrison. But the joke was mistimed.

The meal was about half finished, when, attracted by the attitude of my mother, whose sense of hearing was remarkably acute, my father laid down his knife and fork, and began listening; in which he was soon imitated by Mr. Postle; and for a while the three, silent and motionless, seemed stiffened into as many statues. There was certainly some unusual humming in the air.

"It sounds," said my father, "like the distant murmer of the sea."

"More like the getting up of a gale," said Mr. Postle.

"It 's the noise of a mob!" exclaimed my mother; "I hear voices and the tramping of feet!"

"Say I told you so!" cried Mr. Postle, jumping up from his chair, and resuming the knife with which he had been cutting his cold meat.

"And if it be a mob," said my father, "it may not be coming to us."

"Hark! it comes nearer and nearer," said my mother, turning pale. "In the name of wonder, George ——" she stopped, startled by a loud noise and a sudden outcry close at hand.

The distant sounds, which excited so intense an interest in the parlor, had reached the kitchen; where they no sooner struck on the tympanum of Jack, than, like a young savage who recognizes the warwhoop of his tribe, he started up, overturning his heavy wooden chair, and shouting his old cry, the

"Tongs and bones — the tongs and bones!" rushed through the hall, and the surgery, and out of the door, which he left wide open. Kezia, in hot pursuit, with my father and Mr. Postle, were soon on the spot; but only just in time to distinguish the flying figure of the idiot, before he disappeared in the gloom of the lane; his cry being still audible, but getting fainter and fainter till it was lost in the general murmur of the mob.

"They are coming up the lane — there is no time to be lost," said Mr. Postle, pushing Kezia, and then drawing my father by the arm into the surgery; the door of which he bolted and locked. They then hurried to the parlor; but my mother, with hen-like instinct, had flown up to her young ones, and was sitting in the nursery to meet whatever might happen, with her twin babes at her bosom. Kezia, by a kindred impulse, was soon in the same chamber; while my father and his assistant posted themselves at a staircase-window which overlooked the lane. It was quite dusk; but at the turn of the road the crowd was just visible, a darker mass amid the gloom, and a moving one, which, as it approached, occasionally threw out a detatched figure or two in front, barely distinguishable as of human shape. Now and then there was a shout; and more rarely a peal of hoarse laughter. As the mob neared the house, its pace quickened.

"There 's Jack!" exclaimed Mr. Postle, whose eyesight was much keener than my father's; "he 's winding in and out among them like an eel!"

"And, if I mistake not," said my father, "they have something like a black flag."

"Yes, — borne by a tall, big fellow," answered the assistant. "As I live, it 's John Hobbes!"

"Poor man," sighed my father.

"As yet I can make out no firearms," said Mr. Postle; "but they have pitchforks and sticks. And yonder's a stuffed figure like a Guy — they are going to burn us in effigy. Yes, they 've got fagots and a truss of straw. Here they come at a run! But ah, ah! my fine fellows, you are too late. Look! — they are trying the surgery door!"

The foremost of the mob, in fact, were endeavoring to effect an entrance as described; but, being foiled, commenced a smart rattling with their sticks on the doors and shutters, ac-

companied by frequent and urgent invitations to the doctor and his assistant to come out and receive their fees. Tired at last of this pastime, they set up a cry "to the front! — to the front!"

Anticipating this movement, my father and his companion hurried into the nursery, the abode of Terror and Despair. My mother, with an infant in each arm, was seated in the easy-chair, her eyes closed, and her face of a ghastly white; so that she might have been taken for dead, or in a fit, but for occasional ejaculations. Kezia, with her apron thrown over her head, knelt beside her mistress; whilst the nurse, with folded arms, leaned her back against the wall between the windows — a position secure from any missile from without. The two babes alone were unconscious of danger — the one smiling and crowing; the other fast asleep.

Taking the hint from Mrs. Prideaux, my father removed his partner and her progeny into a safe nook beyond the angle of projectiles, and only in good time; for the arrangement was hardly completed when a large stone came crashing through the window, and rebounded on the floor.

"Put out the lights!" cried Mr. Postle; "they only serve for marks to aim at," — and, in spite of the remonstrances of the females, the candles were extinguished.

The whole mob by this time had weathered the corner of the house; and having vainly tried the front-door, and thoroughly battered it, as well as the parlor-shutter with their bludgeons, proceeded to organize that frightful concert of rough music with which the lower orders in the provinces were accustomed to serenade an obnoxious character — a hideous medley of noises extracted from cow-horns, cat-calls, whistles, old kettles, metal pans, rattles, and other discordant instruments, described by Jack as the tongs and bones. The din was dreadful; and yet far less so than the profane imprecations and savage threats that were shouted out at every pause of the wild band. There were women too in the crowd; and the cry of "Where's Sukey Hobbes? — Come out, you body-snatcher!" were frequently repeated by voices much shriller than the rest.

"I must — I will speak to them," said my father; and before Mr. Postle could remonstrate or interpose, he had thrown up the sash, and uttered the first three words of his address.

But he was heard no further. His appearance was the signal for one of those yells of execration so awful to hear from a multitude of human throats: a ferocious howl fit only to salute an incarnate fiend, and from which my father recoiled in soul, more than he shrank in body from the ensuing volley of stones. His place, however, was immediately occupied by another orator, in the person of Kezia, who, regardless of the pelting, presented herself to the assembly, screaming at the highest pitch of her voice: —

"You sanguine monsters! do you want to kill us with fright, and our poor innocent babbies?"

"Yes — and to make skeletons of you," replied a hoarse voice from the crowd; a retort applauded by so vociferous a cheer, and such atrocious expressions, that Kezia, with an exclamation of horror, precipitately withdrew to her old position.

Her retreat was hailed with a loud huzza, mingled with derisive laughter, and as it ceased ringing, the dark room was suddenly illuminated by a red glare that projected the shadow of the window-frames, inwards, upon the ceiling. The mob had ignited a quantity of straw and wood, forming an enormous bonfire, by the light of which the persons and features of the ringleaders were easily recognized.

"There is Jack again!" said Mr. Postle, "flitting amidst the smoke like an imp of mischief. And John Hobbes is waving his black flag about like a madman — and yonder is Roger Heap, with a child's bonnet on a pitchfork!"

"And there am I, burning by proxy," said my father, pointing to the dark stuffed figure that was dangling from a triangle of poles in the midst of the blaze. "I shall soon be done to a cinder, and then the cooks will disperse."

"I wish they may," said Mr. Postle, "but the faces they turn up to us are desperately fierce and vicious, as well as their words. I hardly think that their excitement will be satisfied without an attack on the premises, and perhaps taking a few ounces of blood. But what is the matter now?"

As he spoke there was an uncertain stir and movement among the crowd, with a confused outcry, amidst which the words "justice" and "constables" were prominently audible. But it was a false alarm: his worship and his myrmidons either did not or would not know of the tumult, and were

snugly and safely housed at home, or in their usual haunts. The report, however, served the same purpose that their presence would have done; for after some hesitation and wavering of the mass to and fro, Roger Heap thrusting his pitchfork into the burning effigy, ran with it up the river bank, and pitched the half-consumed figure, still blazing, into the stream. The mob then dispersed in different directions, the last of them being Catechism Jack, who, after tossing about the glowing sparkling embers, squib-fashion, for a minute or two, ran after the main body.

The smouldering figure meanwhile slowly floated along on the surface of the sluggish river, silently watched by my father and his assistant; till after a few turns and windings, it vanished like the last twinkle of a burnt paper, in the black, blank, distance.

"So ends the *auto-da-fé*," exclaimed Mr. Postle. "Now, then, for candles to inspect and repair our damage."

It was less than might have been expected. Thanks to the precaution of extinguishing the lights, the majority of the stones had missed the windows: only a few panes were broken; and the holes were soon stopped with paper and rags.

"Are the wretches all gone, George?" asked my mother, before she ventured to unclose her eyes.

"All," answered my father — "man, woman, and boy!"

Thus reassured, my mother, with many broken phrases of thanksgiving, came out of her corner, and willingly resigned the dear twins to Kezia, who covered them with her kisses. The nurse also quitted her position, and in her usual calm, sweet voice suggested that her mistress, after her fright and exhaustion, would be the better for some restorative; to which the assistant added that nobody, the infants excepted, would be the worse for some sort of stimulant.

Accordingly the brandy, the kettle, the sugar, tumblers, and spoons, were fetched from below; and cheered by a cordial mixture, the nerves of the company, manly and womanly, soon recovered their tone, and enabled the parties to discuss the circumstances of the recent riot. It was generally agreed that, for that night at least, there would be no futher disturbance; they, nevertheless, continued to sit up, keeping a vigilant watch, back and front, till two hours having elapsed

without any fresh alarm, they retired to their respective chambers.

"And how is all this dreadful work to end, George?" inquired my mother, as soon as she found herself, with her husband, in their bedroom.

"Heaven knows!" replied my father. "Only one thing is certain — that the practice must be given up, and we must quit the neighborhood."

"What, sell the business!" exclaimed my mother.

"Yes, if anybody will buy it," said my father. "He must be a liberal man, indeed, who, after this night's demonstration, will bid me anything for the good-will."

"Why then we are ruined!" cried my mother.

"Or something very like it," responded my father — as indeed appeared but too probable when my unlucky parents came to talk over their future prospects; the only comfort before them being that very forlorn hope held out by the old proverb —

WHEN THINGS ARE AT THE WORST, THEY WILL MEND.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN INVALID.

THE moment my father opened his eyes in the morning, they rested on the shattered window-panes, with their holes patched with paper or stuffed with rags, the transparent and the opake, as they admitted or excluded the early sunshine, forming strong diversities of light and shadow. Still, the events of the overnight seemed so dream-like, that he mechanically stepped out of bed, and went to look abroad for confirmation. And, alas! there it was, in the road; that great dark mark, indicating the site of the opprobrious bonfire — a round black spot, a blot as it were, on the parish. The leaves on one side of the poplar-tree were visibly scorched; and he could even trace where Roger Heap had run up the bank to heave the burning effigy in the river. On these tokens he looked, however, with more pain than resentment. Accustomed, as a medical man, to witness the infirmities, frailties, frenzies, and morbid irritability of human nature, he made large allowance for its violence and its weakness; and felt little more anger at the outrage of the mob, than if he had been struck by a crazy patient, or abused by a delirious one.

My mother, on the contrary, was no sooner awake to the dilapidations in the casement, with all their suggestions of glaziers, and new panes, and putty, than she burst out into the most bitter reproaches on the whole parish; and especially the authorities, who ought to have preserved the peace, from the justice down to the beadle. They were a set, she said, of hapless, cowardly sots, and deserved to be locked in their own cage and set in their own stocks for neglecting their duties.

"Well, well," said my father, "thank Heaven, we are all safe and unhurt; for nobody has even received a scratch; which, considering such missiles as those" — and he pointed to a large stone on the floor — "must be regarded as providential."

"It 's that," replied my mother, "that makes me so mad! One had better be murdered at once, than subjected to such dreadful alarms, and scared out of one's senses;" and again

she launched out in vituperation of the village wretches. The truth is, there is nothing that people resent more strongly, or forgive less easily, than a thorough frightening; the absence of personal injury serving to aggravate the offence. Thus my mother, finding herself safe and sound, as well as all who belonged to her, begrudged, miser-like, the needless expenditure of terror, or so little real damage; just as a certain traveller reproached the highwayman, who pleaded in extenuation of having shot at him, that there was no bullet in the pistol. "So much the worse," exclaimed the indignant old gentleman; "so much the worse, you villain; for then you frightened me for nothing!"

My mother's denunciations, however, did not confine themselves to the inhabitants of the neighborhood; but gradually took a wider range; and finally involved so large a portion of mankind in general, as to compel my father to remind her, that, with such sentiments, one ought to renounce society, and retire into solitude.

"And why should n't we renounce society?" cried my mother. "Did n't society renounce us on the night of the christening? For my part, I could begin to-morrow — and go into a desert!"

"No doubt of it," replied my father, very gravely. "The only difficulty is to dwell there. It may do very well for a lone man or woman, disgusted with society, to become a recluse, and live in a cave, a cell, or a grotto; but I fear it would be extremely inconvenient, if not impraticable, for married people, with a young family, to turn hermits."

"No matter," said my mother. "I know what I mean. I hate the world, and I wish I could fly from it."

"Phoo, phoo!" said my father.

"And what am I to do then," whined my mother, "if I am not to complain?"

"Why, come here," said my father, "and look at the flight of the miller's pigeons; how pretty and playful and harmless they look, after the burning flakes that were fluttering in the air last night."

My mother immediately slid out of bed, and slipped on her dressing-gown; but, instead of looking at the miller's pigeons, went off to her own dove-cote, the nursery, to assure herself of the welfare of her twin-babes. They were fast asleep; and

their calm, chubby, innocent faces soon put to flight whatever remained of her misanthropy. An effect they had previously produced on Kezia, who, like her mistress, had waked up in such a virulent humor against the whole county, that, as she delared, "Provided the family had an Ark, she should n't care if all Lincolnshire was under water."

My father, meanwhile, dressed himself with professional celerity, and went down to the surgery; which he no sooner entered, than to his astonishment he found himself in utter darkness. The shutters had not been taken down; and the fanlight over the door was still blocked up by its temporary barricade. It was the first time that the assistant had failed to begin business at the usual hour, and my father hastened into the kitchen, and anxiously inquired if anything was the matter with Mr. Postle.

"I am afraid there is, sir," said Kezia, "for I overheard him very restless in the night. He got up several times, and walked about his room, a talking to himself. Afterwards, towards morning, he was quiet; so thinking he was asleep, instead of calling him, I thought best to let him indulge a little."

"Quite right, Kizzy," replied my father. "The poor fellow's zeal and excitement last night have been too much for him."

"I believe they have, indeed," said Kezia, with great animation; "for to be sure Mr. Postle takes as much excitement and interest in us as if he had been born and bred in the family; and its good or bad luck comes home to him like a blood relation."

"Yes," said my father, "and more than to some blood relations with long beards:" an allusion that Kezia understood and intensely relished. "But I must go and open shop;" and, rejecting the housemaid's assistance, he took down the surgery shutters, and locking the outer door, repaired to the breakfast-parlor, where he found my mother and two unopened letters awaiting his presence. The first, from the curate, was kind and considerate. He did not deny some temporary vexation at the loss of the plate, as the gift of his late congregation; but fortunately their regard and good-will were not removable with the salt-cellars; the intrinsic value of which was so immaterial to him, that he begged my father would think no more of the matter. The lawyer's letter from Mr. Ruffey

was more rigid: clients, he said, were not so grateful a class in general, as to make presentation tankards to attorneys of common occurrence. He did therefore set a very high value on the testimonial to his professional zeal and ability, independent of its worth as solid silver. The exact value he could not state; but it was considerable. To bring home such a robbery to the perpetrators was a duty to society He relied accordingly that for the public interest my father would leave no stone unturned, and spare no expense, to trace the stolen property, and thereby bring the offender, or offenders, to justice. In this hope he would say nothing about compensation, or an equivalent — at least for the present.

"Humph!" said my father, "the lawyer, at any rate, must be indemnified."

"And here," said my mother, holding out a three-cornered epistle, "is the answer to a note which I wrote to Mrs. Trent." My father took the billet and read as follows: —

"MADAM, —

"In answer to your distressing communication, what can I say, or, indeed, what can be said, where necessity extorts submission? My plate is gone — and by this time melted down — and consequently irretrievable.

"My poor silver souvenirs! Every spoon represented a young lady! I have others left; but those were my favorites. All massy and solid, and stamped with the Goldsmiths' mark, and each recalling some interesting young female, now a highly polished and well-educated woman. One of the spoons, with a ducal crest, was left me by a charming, accomplished creature, just finished, and now moving in the first circles of rank and fashion. Another, with a plain cipher, belonged to the present Lady Mawbey, and retained the marks of her little aristocratic teeth. To a preceptress, such memorials of the juvenile objects of her affectionate solicitude have a preciousness beyond Potosi and Peru. Of course, as regards mere metallic value, they may be replaced by an equal number of spoons of equal weight, or coalesced into a silver teapot; but, alas! all the endearing associations are obliterated forever!

"I am, Madam,

"Your very obedient, humble servant,

"AMELIA TRENCH."

"She must have a silver teapot!" exclaimed my father. "Though where it is to come from, in the present state of our finances, is beyond my guess. And talking of teapots, Postle is poorly this morning, my dear, and must have his breakfast in bed — Kezia will take it up to him." Had my father looked at the maid-of-all-work as he spoke, he would have perceived a sign of prudency that would have greatly diverted him, for both her cheeks seemed flushed with a claret-mark; but his attention was attracted towards his own meal, and the blush evaporated without a comment. Kezia quietly placed a great cup of tea and a small plate of toast on her waiter, and proceeded up stairs, to introduce his breakfast, with all proper discretion, into the bedchamber of Mr. Postle.

"Well I must and will say," cried my mother, "we are a persecuted family. Our misfortunes never come single — they never rain but they pour. After all our other troubles, here is Mr. Postle taken ill — breeding an infectious fever perhaps — and with those dear children in the house — I declare I shall go distracted!"

"Make yourself easy," replied my father; "Postle is only a little out of sorts, and rest and quiet will soon set him to rights. And in the mean time the burden of his illness will fall chiefly on myself; for I shall not only have to make up the prescriptions, but, as that Catechism Jack has absconded, I must carry out my own physic."

"I wish it may be so," said my mother, shaking her head. "But I am far from satisfied in my mind. Mr. Postle is a very feverish subject, and when he shakes hands with one his palm is always burning hot. If he breaks out with anything catching, I shall go wild!"

"At any rate, ma'am," said Kezia, who had returned in time to hear the latter part of the discussion, "fever or no fever, we'll use all the preventives. The dear infants shall have camphor bags directly, and Mr. Postle's landing shall be well fumigated with hot vinegar, and we'll burn bastilles all over the house."

"Pastils," said my father, "pastils."

"Well, pastils. And, perhaps, if somebody was to smoke about the house," added Kezia, with a look that applied the "somebody" to her master, "for they do say that in the Great Plague, the tobacconists were the only unaffected people in London."

"You are quite correct," said my father; "and if needful, the house shall stink like a tap-room. Only in that case, as I never could stomach even a cigar, and your mistress does not smoke, and I will venture to answer for Mrs. Prideaux, you must take to the pipe yourself, Kezia, and do the fumigations."

"And I would, too!" cried Kezia, with energy, "if it made me as sick as a dog!"

"Ah, you don't know what you undertake," said my mother. "The truth is, I did once try to smoke my favorite geraniums, to destroy the insects."

"And did n't it kill 'em, ma'am?" asked Kezia.

"By no means," replied my mother. "Quite the contrary; for your master found me insensible in the greenhouse, and the vermin as lively as ever."

My mother's anecdote put an end to the discussion; and my father having finished his breakfast, repaired to the surgery, and posted himself at the desk usually occupied by Mr. Postle. A glance at the blotting-book showed how the assistant's thoughts had been lately occupied, for the paper was covered with rough pen and ink illuminations, in the style called the Grotesque. Amongst the figures, two were particularly prominent, and plainly recognizable by their features, however otherwise transformed. Thus the bearded profile of a certain goat was obviously that of Uncle Rumbold — he was, of course, the rampant Bear with the turbaned head of the Great Mogul; and as unmistakably he was the hideous Ogre, elsewhere striding along, and clutching a fat naked child in each hand by the hair of its head. The Demon with horns and a tail was a strong likeness of Doctor Shackle; and the bottle-bellied Spider, with a human face, was evidently the same obnoxious personage. In a third design, he was dangling from a gibbet; and in a fourth, he lent his marked physiognomy to a huge Serpent, which, after a natural coil or two, twisted off into a corkscrew that went wandering half over the paper, as if in search of something to draw. Other emblems were equally significant of the assistant's despondency and the decay of the practice. The mortar, turned into a garden-pot, had a rose growing in it; and from the physic-basket, converted to domestic uses, protruded a bunch of carrots.

And, in truth, the gloomy prospect entertained by the artist seemed likely to be realized: hour after hour passed away, and still the doctor found himself in the surgery without a patient or a prescription. At last the confinement became so irksome, that he ran up-stairs to the assistant's bedroom, to ascertain the true state of his case. The invalid was still asleep, but restless, grinding his teeth, turning from side to side, muttering, and occasionally tossing his arms and clenched hands, as if laboring under the influence of some horrible dream. Nevertheless he did not awake, when the doctor felt his forehead and examined his pulse; for, conscious of an impending illness, and to counteract his nervous excitement, he had taken a narcotic.

"This is more serious than I thought," muttered my father. "He is really ill, and must be looked to when he wakes." And with a heavy heart and step the doctor slowly descended the stairs; at the foot of which he was intercepted by Kezia, with an inquiry after poor Mr. Postle.

"Worse than I could wish," replied my father; and, with a deep sigh, he passed into the surgery, paralyzed, so to speak, in his professional right arm.

Still there came no customer; a dearth of business less annoying, however, to the proprietor than to another party who looked on. Led by the impulse of old habit, Kezia every now and then made a move towards the surgery, but on looking through the glass door, and seeing my father at the desk instead of Mr. Postle, immediately retreated. Yet these brief glimpses sufficed to fret her with the fact that, come when she would, there never was a living creature with the doctor, except the leeches. "It's well," she said, "that our cordials and compounds are so nasty; for many a publican in such a case would take to drinking and swallow up his own stock in trade."

At last, on one of her visits to the surgery, there was actually a strange man in it; no patient, however, but the carrier, who, having delivered a small parcel, and received the carriage money, immediately departed. My father opened the packet, briefly inspected the contents, and then with an audible remark deposited it in a drawer. The remark was meant for himself; but the glass door being ajar, the observation reached another, and not indifferent ear.

All this time my mother was in the nursery discussing with Mrs. Prideaux the topics appropriate to the locality, and, in particular, the merits of various kinds of food for babes; not forgetting her favorite story of the man-servant who was sent to the biscuit-baker's for the infant victual, and forgetting the name of tops and bottoms, clapped his shilling on the counter, and said, "Head or tail." This anecdote she had told, and was just beginning another, when Kezia entered the room, with a melancholy face, of faded red and white, like an ill-dyed handkerchief with the color partly washed out. She was evidently the bearer of evil tidings, which my mother immediately guessed referred to Mr. Postle.

"Yes, poor Mr. Postle is very poorly," replied Kezia. "The doctor does not say so, implicitly, but he shakes his head, which stands, medically, for the same thing."

"Why, then, we may have a fever in the house after all!" exclaimed my mother.

"And I have bad news besides," said Kezia, her looks becoming still more gloomy, and her voice more dismal. "Master has got his nymph down from London."

"His what!" cried my mother.

"His nymph," repeated Kezia.

"I conceive she means lymph," suggested Mrs. Prideaux.

"Yes, lymph, or nymph," said Kezia, "it's a pleasanter word than vaccinating matter. However, it's come down from town, — and I wish Doctor Jenner had been hung, I do, before he invented it."

"But are you certain or it?" inquired my mother.

"Quite," answered Kezia; "I saw the parcel. And as soon as Mr. Postle goes down, you will have master up here, at those dear babes to scarify their poor arms, and introduce the beastly virus into their little systems."

Her prophecy was correct. In about half an hour my father made his appearance in the nursery, packet in hand, and proceeded to impart to my mother a piece of intelligence, of which to his surprise he found her already in possession.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OUR VACCINATION.

THE practice of Vaccination, which has since proved such a blessing to mankind, was received at its first introduction into England with anything but a gracious welcome. Like other great public benefits, it had of course to encounter the opposition of that large class of persons who set their stereotype faces against all innovations; but besides this resistance, active or passive, it involved, in its most material feature, a peculiarity adverse to its popularity. The mere notion of deriving a disease from a brute beast was sufficient to excite a prejudice against it in the minds of the million; and the most absurd stories of the deplorable effects of the cow-pock were currently circulated and believed by the ignorant and the credulous, especially in the provinces. Narratives were gravely repeated, and swallowed, of horns that sprouted from human heads; — of human feet that hardened into parted hoofs; — of human bodies that became pied or brindled with dappled hair; — in short, the ancient metamorphosis of Iö seemed to have been only an extreme case of Vaccination.

My mother, prone to misgiving, and easily *cowed*, readily entertained the common fears and doubts on the subject; an impression in which she was strongly backed by Kezia, who adopted the vulgar opinions to their utmost extent, and devoutly put faith in all the extravagant tales that were told of the victims of the operation. It may be supposed, therefore, that the two females looked with no favorable eye on my father's preparations; indeed, as far as wishing could effect it, the "nymph" and the lancet were more than once thrown out of the window.

"And are you really going, George, to vaccinate the children?" asked my mother, with a faltering voice.

"I really am," replied my father, and then resumed his quiet whistle, whilst he carefully charged a sharp lancet with the vaccine matter.

"Well, if you must you must," said my mother. "But for my part I cannot reconcile my mind to it; and I'm afraid I

never shall. There seems something so unnatural and revolting in transferring the humor of a diseased brute beast into the human frame!"

"Ah! the old story," said my father. "That we may expect to see the bovine humor break out again in horns and a tail. And do you really believe, my dear, that there is any foundation for such popular romances?"

"Heaven knows!" said my mother. "But very strange things are said to have happened from it. Ask Kezia."

"And pray what is your legend?" said my father, turning towards the maid-of-all-work.

"It's about a little girl, sir," replied Kezia, "as was vaccinated down in our part of the country, namely, Suffolk."

"And was turned into a heifer, eh?" said my father.

"Why no, at least not in corporal shape," said Kezia. And I won't speak positive, though some do, to a pair of little knobs of horns, that one could just feel under the skin on her forehead. But this I know, it was moral impossible to keep her out of the fields, and from running about the common, and wading up to her knees in pools of water."

"Pshaw! a mere country hoyden," said my father.

"Perhaps she were," said Kezia, reddening. "Only in that case she need n't have moo'd whenever a cow did; and what's more, in summer-time she always had a swarm of flies about her nose and ears."

"I think I could account for that," said my father.

"Well, then," cried Kezia, "there was one thing that was cow-like at any rate. She could n't abide scarlet; and when they wanted to put her into a red frock, she tore, and butted so with her head, that they were forced to give it up."

"Very good," said my father, again turning towards my mother. "Well, my dear, I have heard Kezia's story, and in spite of it, I think we may safely vaccinate the children, and run the risk of being tossed by them afterwards."

"It's no joke," said my mother, in a crying tone, "though you make one of it. It's introducing an animal change into the constitution, and who knows, if such a thing as a murrain was to break out among the cattle, but the children might have it too?"

"Why, it would only be according to the old doctrine of sympathy," said my father.

"And why not?" said my mother. "It is well known that if a man is bit by a dog, and the dog afterwards runs mad, the man will go crazy too!"

"A vulgar error, my dear," said my father. "An exploded fallacy. But come; make your mind easy. There is no more danger of the children's having the murrain than of their bursting themselves, as a cow sometimes does, in a clover-field. As to the operation itself, it is a mere flea-bite, and I will be responsible for the consequences. — Mrs. Prideaux, may I trouble you to hold this little one on your lap," — and the wilful doctor took one of the twins from the cradle and placed it in the arms of the genteel nurse.

"I can't — I won't see it done!" screamed Kezia, turning her face to the wall, and throwing her apron over her head.

"Nor I neither," exclaimed my mother, covering her face with her hands. And they were sincere in their horror. We, of this year of grace, 1845, convinced by experience of the beneficial effects of the discovery of Jenner, and consequently wiser in our *Jenneration*, cannot sympathize with the ludicrous terrors that prevailed when Vaccination was a new thing. They were nevertheless both strong and general, and hundreds and thousands of females would have had the same dread of the operation as my mother and her maid.

My father, meanwhile, grasping a little plump arm so firmly as to tighten the skin, thrice plunged his lancet obliquely into the flesh; the infant expressing its sense of the proceeding by as many squalls. Had it *bellowed*, there were two persons in the room who would not have been surprised in the least. My father then charged his lancet with fresh lymph, which he introduced into the wounds; and then, having repeated the whole process on the other little fat arm, the babe was exchanged for his twin-brother, who underwent *seriatim* the same operations.

"There!" said my father, as he finished the work, — "there, they are insured for life against the small-pox and its disfigurations."

"I wish they may be, and from all disfigurations besides," said my mother, taking her hands from her eyes; while Kezia removed her apron, and turning round from the wall, gazed mournfully on each little arm, scarred with what she called mentally, "the mark of the beast."

* * * * *

COMIC MISCELLANY.

ANNUAL
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THE FANCY FAIR.

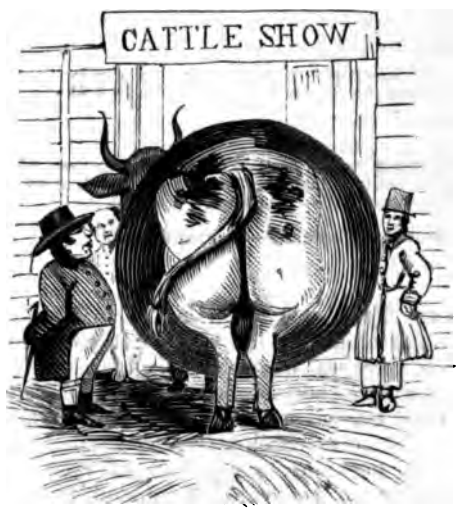
"It beareth the name of Vanity Fair, because the town where it is kept is 'lighter than vanity:' and also because all that is there sold, or that cometh thither, is vanity." — PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

"I named this place Boothia." — CAPTAIN ROSS.

"A FANCY Fair," said my friend L., in his usual quaint style, "is a fair subject for fancy; take up your pen and try. For instance, there was one held at the Mansion House. Conceive a shambling, shock-headed clodpole, familiar with the wakes of Bow, Barnet, and Bartlemy, elbowing his awkward way into the Egyptian Hall, his round eyes and mouth all-agape in the ludicrous expectation of seeing the Lord Mayor standing on his very Worshipful head, the Lady Mayoress lifting a hundred weight by her Right Honorable hair, the Sword-Bearer swallowing his blade of state, the Recorder conjuring ribbons from his learned and eloquent mouth, and the Senior Alderman with a painted York-and-Lancaster-face, dancing a *saraband* à la Pierrot! Or fancy Jolterhead at the fair of the Surrey Zoölogical, forcing his clumsy, destructive course through groups of female fashionables, like a hog in a tulip-bed, with the equally laughable intention of inspecting long horns and short horns, prime beasts and lean stock; of handling the porkers and coughing the colts. Nay, imagine our bumpkin at the great Fancy Fair of all, blundering up to a stall kept by a Royal Duchess, and inquiring perseveringly for a gilt gingerbread King and Queen, — a long-promised fairing to Brother Bill at Leighton Buzzard!"

Little did L. dream during this flourish of fancy that his whimsical fiction had been forestalled by fact; and a deep

shade of vexation passed over his features while he perused the following hints from Hants, as conveyed in a *bonâ fide* letter to the Editor of the Comic Annual.



A ROUND OF BEEF.

HONNORD SUR,

Dont no if you Be a Hamshire man, or a man atacht to the fancy, but as Both such myself, have took the libberty to write about what is no joke. Of coarse allude to being Hoaxt up to Lonnon, to see a fair no fair at all and About as much fancy as you mite fancy on the pint of a pin. —

Have follerd the Fancy, ever since cumming of Age, and bean to every Puglistical fite, from the Gaim Chicking down to the fite last weak. Have bated Buls drawd Baggers, and Kild rats myself meening to say with my hone Dogs. Ought to no wot Fancy his. Self prays is no re-comendation But have bean at every Fair Waik or Revvle in England. Ought to no then wot a Fare is.

Has for the Lonnon job — could Sea nothin like Fancy

and nothing like fare. Only a Toy shop out of Town with a gals skool looking after it, without a Guvverness and all oglein like Winkin. Lots of the fare sects but no thimbel rig, no priking in the garter no nothing. Am blest if our hone little Fare down at Goos Grean dont lick it all to Styx. Bulbeating, Baggerdrawing, Coggleplaying, Rastlin, a Sopped pigtale, a Mane of Cox Jackasreacing jumpin in Sax and a Grand Sire Peal of Trouble Bobs puld by the Collige youths by way of givin a Bells Life to the hole. Call that Fancy. Too Wild Best Shoes, fore theaters besides a Horseplay a Dwarft a She Giant a fat Child a prize ox five carriboo savidges a lurned Pigg an Albany with wite Hares a real See Murmad a Fir Eater and lots of Punshes and Juddis. Call that a Fare.

FAIR PLAY'S A JEW—

Now for Lonnon. No Sanderses — no Richardsens no wumwills menageris no backy boxis to shy for — no lucky

Boxis. No poster makin no jugling or Dancing. Prest one yung laidy in ruge cheaks and trowsers verry civelly For a bit of a caper on the tite rop — But miss got on the hi rop, and calld for a conestubble. Askt annother in a ridding habbit for the faver of a little horsemunship and got kicked out of her Booth. Goos Grean for my munny! Saw a yung laidy there that swallerd a Sord and wasnt too Partickler to jump threw a hoop. Dutchesses look dull after that at a Fare. Verry dignified, but Prefer the Wax Wurk, as a Show. Dont sea anny think in Watch Pappers cut out by Countisses that have been born with all their harms and legs — not Miss Biffins.

Must say one thing for Goos Grean. Never got my pockit pict xcept at Lonnon — am sorry to say lost my Reader and Ticker and every Dump I had let alone a single sovran. And lost the best part of that besides to a Yung Laidy that nevver gave change. Greenish enuf says you for my Tim of Day but I was gammund by the baggidge to bye five shillin Pin Cushins. Wish Charrity had stayd at Hoam! The ould Mare got a coald by waiting outside. And the five Charrity pincushins had n't Bran enuf in their hole boddys to make her a Mash.

Am told the Hospittle don't clear anny grate proffits after all is dun and Like enuff. A Fare should be a Fare and fokes at Room ought to do as Room does. Have a notion Peeressis that keep Booths wood take moor Munny if they was n't abuv having the dubble drums and speakin trumpets and gongs. Theres nothin like goin the hole Hog!

Shall be happy, sur, to sea You at Goos Green next Fare and pint out the Difference. Maybe in Flurtashun, and Match-macking and getting off Dorters along with the dolls we ar a littel cut out, but for Ginuen Fancy and Fun and Fair Play its a mear Green Goos to Goos Green.

Remain Sur,
Your humbel tu command,
JACOB GILES.

P. S. Think Vallintins day wood be a Good fixter for next Fancy Fare. Shant say why. Sniff sumthing of the kind going on amung our hone Gals — Polly as just begd a sak of bran and she dont keap rabits. Pincushins and nothin else.

Tother day cum across a large Watchpokit and suspect Mrs. G. is at the Bottom of it. No churnin butter no packin egs no setten Hens and crammin Turkis — All sniping ribbins folding papper sowin up satten and splitting hole trusses of straw. Am blest if its for litterin down Horsis. Dont no how its all to be got to markit at Lonnon, the nine Gals and all 'xcept its by a Pickfurd Van.

FANCY-FAIRINGS.

THE SCHOOLMASTER ABROAD.

I ONCE, for a very short time indeed, had the honor of being a schoolmaster, and was invested with the important office of "rearing the tender thought," and "teaching the young idea how to shoot;" of educating in the principles of the Established Church, and bestowing the strictest attention to morals. The case was this: my young friend G——, a graduate of Oxford, and an ingenious and worthy man, thought proper, some months back, to establish, or endeavor to establish, an academy for young gentlemen, in my immediate vicinity. He had already procured nine day-pupils to begin with, whom he himself taught, — prudence as yet prohibiting the employment of ushers, — when he was summoned hastily to attend upon a dying relative in Hampshire, from whom he had some expectations. This was a dilemma to poor G——, who had no one to leave in charge of his three classes; and he could not bear the idea of playing truant himself so soon after commencing business. In his extremity he applied to me as his forlorn hope, and one forlorn enough; for it is well known among my friends, that I have little Latin, and less Greek, and am, on every account, a worse accountant. I urged these objections to G——, but in vain, for he had no "friend in need," learned or unlearned, within any reasonable distance, and, as he said to comfort me, "in three or four days merely the boys could not *unlearn* much of anything."

At last I gave way to his importunity. On Thursday night, he started from the tree of knowledge by a branch coach; and at nine on Friday morning I found myself sitting at his desk in the novel character of pedagogue. I am sorry to say, not one of the boys played truant, or was confined at home with a violent illness. There they were, nine little mischievous wretches goggling, tittering, pointing, winking, grimacing, and

mocking at authority, in a way enough to invoke two Elisha bears out of Southgate Wood. To put a stop to this indecorum, I put on my spectacles, stuck my cane upright in the

A BRANCH COACH.

desk, with the fool's-cap atop — but they inspired little terror; worn out at last, I seized the cane, and rushing from my dais, well flogged — I believe it is called flogging — the boy, a Creole, nearest me; who, though far from the biggest, was much more daring and impertinent than the rest. So far my random selection was judicious; but it appeared afterwards that I had chastised an only son, whose mother had expressly stipulated for him an exemption from all punishment. I suspect, with the moral prudence of fond mothers, she had informed the little imp of the circumstance, for this Indian-Pickle fought and kicked his preceptor as unceremoniously as he would have scuffled with Black Diana or Agamemnon. My first move, however, had a salutary effect; the urchins settled,

or made believe to settle, to their tasks; but I soon perceived that the genuine industry and application belonged to one, a clever-looking boy, who, with pen and paper before him, was sitting at the further end of a long desk, as great a contrast to the others as the Good to the Bad Apprentice in Hogarth. I could see his tongue even at work at one corner of his mouth, — a very common sign of boyish assiduity, — and his eyes never left his task but occasionally to glance towards his master, as if in anticipation of the approving smile, to which he looked forward as the prize of industry. I had already selected him inwardly for a favorite, and resolved to devote my best abilities to his instruction, when I saw him hand the paper, with a sly glance, to his neighbor, from whom it passed rapidly down the desk, accompanied by a running titter, and sidelong looks, that convinced me the supposed copy was, indeed, a copy, not of "Obey your superiors," or "Age commands respect," but of the head of the college, and, as a glimpse showed, a head with very ludicrous features. Being somewhat fatigued with my last execution, I suffered the cane of justice to sleep, and inflicted the fool's-cap — literally the fool's — for no clown in pantomime, the great Grimaldi not excepted, could have made a more laughter-stirring use of the costume. The little enormities, who only tittered before, now shouted outright, and nothing but the enchanted wand of bamboo could flap them into solemnity. Order was restored, for they saw I was, like Earl Grey, resolved to "stand by my order;" and while I was deliberating, in some perplexity, how to begin business, the two biggest boys came forward voluntarily, and standing as much as they could in a circle, presented themselves, and began to read as the first Greek class. Mr. Irving may boast of his prophets as much as he will; but in proportion to the numbers of our congregations, I had far more reason to be proud of my gabblers in an unknown tongue. I, of course, discovered no *lapsus linguæ* in the performance, and after a due course of gibberish, the first class dismissed itself, with a brace of bows and an evident degree of self-satisfaction at being so perfect in the present, after being so imperfect in the past. I own this first act of our solemn farce made me rather nervous against the next, which proved to be the Latin class, and I have no doubt to an adept would have seemed as much a Latin comedy as those per-

formed at the Westminster school. We got through the second course quite correct, as before, and I found with some satisfaction, that the third was a dish of English Syntax,

A SECOND COURSE.

where I *was* able to detect flaws, and the heaps of errors that I had to arrest made me thoroughly sensible of the bliss of ignorance in the Greek and Latin. A general lesson in English reading ensued, through which we glided smoothly enough, till we came to a sand-bank in the shape of a Latin quotation, which I was requested to English. It was something like this, "Nemo mortalius omnibus hora sapit," which I rendered, "No mortal knows at what hour the omnibus starts;" and with this translation the whole school was perfectly satisfied. Nine more bows.

My horror now approached: I saw the little wretches lug out their slates, and begin to cuff out the old sums, a sight that made me wish all the slates at the roof of the house. I knew

very well that when the army of nine attacked my Bonny-castle, it would not long hold out. Unluckily, from inexperience, I gave them all the same question to work, and the consequence was, each brought up a different result — nor would my practical knowledge of Practice allow me to judge of their merits. I had no resource but, Lavatèr-like, to go by Physiognomy, and accordingly selected the solution of the most mathematical-looking boy. But Lavater betrayed me. Master White, a chowder-headed lout of a lad, as dull as a pig of lead, and as mulishly obstinate as Muley Abdallah, persisted that his answer was correct, and at last appealed to the superior authority of a Tutor's Key, that he had kept by stealth in his desk. From this instance my importance declined, and the urchins evidently began to question, with some justice, what right I had to rule nine, who was not competent to the Rule of Three. By way of a diversion, I invited my pupils to a walk; but I wish G—— had been more circumstantial in his instructions before he left. Two of the boys pleaded sick headaches to remain behind; and I led the rest, through my arithmetical failure, under very slender government, by the most unfortunate route I could have chosen, — in fact, past the very windows of their parents, who complained afterwards that they walked more like bears than boys, and that if Mr. G—— had drawn lots for one at a raffle, he could not have been more unfortunate in his new usher.

To avoid observation, which I did not court, I led them aside into a meadow, and pulling out a volume of Paradise Lost, left the boys to amuse themselves as they pleased. They pleased, accordingly, to get up a little boxing match, *à la* Crib and Molineux — between Master White and the little Creole, of which I was informed only by a final shout and a stream of blood that trickled, or treacled, from the flat nose of the child of color. Luckily, as I thought, he was near home, whither I sent him for washing and consolation, and in return for which, in the course of a quarter of an hour, while still in the field, a black footman, in powder blue turned up with yellow, brought me the following note: —

"Mrs. Col. Christopher informs Mr. G——'s Usher, that as the vulgar practice of pugilism is allowed at Spring Grove Academy, Master Adolphus Ferdinand Christopher will in future be educated at home; particularly as she understands Master C. was punished

in the morning, in a way that only becomes blacks and slaves.— To the new Usher at Mr. G——'s."

Irritated at this event and its commentary, I resolved to punish Master White, but Master White was nowhere to be found, having expelled himself and run away home, where he complained to his parents of the new usher's deficiencies, and told the whole story of the sum in Practice, begging earnestly to be removed from a school where, as he said, it was impossible for him to improve himself. The prayer of the petition was heard, and on the morrow, Mr. White's son was minus at Spring Grove Academy. Calling in the remainder, I ordered a march homewards, where I arrived just in time to hear the sham headaches of the two invalids go off with an alarming explosion — for they had thus concerted an opportunity for playing with gunpowder and prohibited arms. Here was another discharge from the school, for no parents think that their children look the better without eyebrows, and accordingly, when they went home for the night, the fathers and mothers resolved to send them to some other school, where no powder was allowed, except upon the head of the master. I was too much hurt to resume schooling after the boys' bad behavior, and so gave them a half-holiday; and never, O never did I so estimate the blessing of sleep, as on that night when I closed my eyelids on all my pupils! But, alas! sleep brought its sorrows: I saw boys fighting, flourishing slates, and brandishing squibs and crackers in my visions; and through all — such is the transparency of dreams — I beheld the stern shadow of G—— looking unutterable reproaches.

The next morning, with many painful recollections, brought one of pleasure; I remembered that it was the King's Birthday, and, in a fit of very sincere loyalty, gave the whole school, alas! reduced by one half, a whole holiday. Thus I got over the end of the week, and Sunday, literally a day of rest, was spent by the urchins at their own homes. It may seem sinful to wish for the death of a fellow-creature, but I could not help thinking of G——'s relative along with what is called a happy release; and he really was so kind, as we learned by an express from G——, as to break up just after his arrival, and that G—— consequently would return in time to resume his scholastic duties on the Monday morning. With infinite pleasure I heard this good bad news from Mrs. G——,

who never interfered in the classical part of the house, and was consequently all unconscious of the reduction in the Spring Grove Establishment. I forged an excuse for immediately leaving off school; "resigned, I kissed the rod" that I resigned, and as I departed, no master but my own, was overwhelmed by a torrent of grateful acknowledgments of the service I had done the school, which, as Mrs. G—— protested, could never have got on without me. How it got on I left G—— to discover, and I am told he behaved rather like Macduff at the loss of his "little ones;" but, luckily, I had given myself warning before his arrival, and escaped from one porch of the Academy at that nick of time when the Archodidasculus was entering by another, perfectly convinced that, however adapted to "live and learn," I should never be able to live and teach.

"COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE."

THE MORNING CALL.

I CANNOT conceive any prospect more agreeable to a weary traveller than the approach to *Bedfordshire*. Each valley reminds him of Sleepy Hollow, the fleecy clouds seem like blankets, the lakes and ponds are clean sheets; the setting sun looks like a warming-pan. He dreams of dreams to come. His travelling-cap transforms to a nightcap, the coach lining feels softlier squabbed; the guard's horn plays "Lullaby." Every flower by the road-side is a poppy. Each jolt of the coach is but a drowsy stumble up-stairs. The lady opposite is the chamber-maid; the gentleman beside her is Boots. He slides into imaginary slippers; he winks and nods flirtingly at Sleep, so soon to be his own. Although the wheels may be rattling into vigilant Wakefield, it appears to him to be sleepy Ware, with its great Bed, a whole County of Down, spread "all before him where to choose his place of rest."

It was in a similar mood, after a long dusty droughty dog-day's journey, that I entered the Dolphin at Bedhampton. I nodded in at the door, winked at the lights, blinked at the company in the coffee-room, yawned for a glass of negus, swallowed it with my eyes shut, as though it had been "a pint of nappy," surrendered my boots, clutched a candlestick, and blundered, slipshod, up the stairs to number nine.

Blessed be the man, says Sancho Panza, who first invented sleep: and blessed be heaven that he did not take out a patent, and keep his discovery to himself. My clothes dropped off me: I saw through a drowsy haze the likeness of a four-poster: "Great Nature's second course" was spread before me; and I fell to without a long grace!

Here 's a body — there 's a bed!
There 's a pillow — here 's a head!
There 's a curtain — here 's a light!
There 's a puff — and so Good Night!

It would have been gross improvidence to waste more words on the occasion; for I was to be roused up again at four o'clock the next morning, to proceed by the early coach. I determined, therefore, to do as much sleep within the interval as I could; and in a minute, short measure, I was with that mandarin, Morpheus, in his Land of Nod.

How intensely we sleep when we are fatigued! Some as sound as tops, others as fast as churches. For my own part I must have slept as fast as a Cathedral, — as fast as Young Rapid wished his father to slumber; — nay, as fast as the French veteran who dreams over again the whole Russian campaign while dozing in his sentry-box. I must have slept as fast as a fast post-coach in my four-poster — or rather I must have slept "like winkin," for I seemed hardly to have closed my eyes, when a voice cried, "Sleep no more!"

It was that of Boots, calling and knocking at the door, whilst through the keyhole a ray of candlelight darted into my chamber.

"Who 's there?"

"It 's me, your honor, I humbly ax pardon — but somehow I 've oversleeped myself, and the coach be gone by!"

"The devil it is! — then I have lost my place!"

"No, not exactly, your honor. She stops a bit at the Dragon, t' other end o' the town; and if your honor would n't object to a bit of a run — "

"That 's enough — come in. Put down the light — and take up that bag — my coat over your arm — and waistcoat with it — and that cravat."

Boots acted according to orders. I jumped out of bed — pocketed my nightcap — screwed on my stockings — plunged into my trousers — rammed my feet into wrong right and left boots — tumbled down the back-stairs — burst through a door, found myself in the fresh air of the stable-yard, holding a lantern, which, in sheer haste, or spleen, I pitched into the horse-pond. Then began the race, during which I completed my toilet, running and firing a verbal volley at Boots, as often as I could spare breath for one.

"And you call this waking me up — for the coach. My waistcoat! — Why I could wake myself — too late — without being called. Now my cravat — and be hanged to you! — Confound that stone! — and give me my coat. A nice road

— for a run . — I suppose you keep it — on purpose. How many gentlemen — may you do a week ? — I 'll tell you what. If I — run — a foot — farther — "

I paused for wind; while Boots had stopped of his own accord. We had turned a corner into a small square; and on the opposite side, certainly stood an inn with the sign of the Dragon, but without any sign of a coach at the door. Boots stood beside me, aghast, and surveying the house from the top to the bottom ; not a wreath of smoke came from a chimney ; the curtains were closed over every window, and the door was closed and shuttered. I could hardly contain my indignation when I looked at the infernal somnolent visage of the fellow, hardly yet broad awake — he kept rubbing his black-lead eyes with his hands, as if he would have rubbed them out.

" Yes, you may well look — you have overslept yourself with a vengeance. The coach must have passed an hour ago — and they have all gone to bed again ! "

" No, there be no coach, sure enough," soliloquized Boots, slowly raising his eyes from the road, where he had been searching for the track of recent wheels, and fixing them with a deprecating expression on my face. " No, there 's no coach — I ax a thousand pardons, your honor — but you see, sir, what with waiting on her, and talking on her, and expecting on her, and giving notice on her, every night of my life, your honor — why I sometimes dreams on her — and that 's the case as is now ! "

"O, NOTHING IN LIFE CAN SADDEN US."

THE SORROWS OF AN UNDERTAKER.

To mention only by name the sorrows of an Undertaker, will be likely to raise a smile on most faces, — the mere words suggest a solemn stalking parody of grief to the satiric fancy; — but give a fair hearing to my woes, and even the veriest mocker may learn to pity an Undertaker who has been unfortunate in all his undertakings.

My father, a Furnisher and Performer in the funeral line, used to say of me — noticing some boyish levities — that "I should never do for an Undertaker." But the prediction was wrong — my parent lied, and I did for him in the way of business. Having no other alternative, I took possession of a very fair stock and business. I felt at first as if plunged in the Black Sea — and when I read my name upon the shop door, it threw a crape over my spirits, that I did not get rid of for some months.

Then came the cares of business. The scandalous insinuated that the funerals were not so decorously performed as in the time of the Late. I discharged my mutes, who were

grown fat and jocular, and sought about for the lean and lank visaged kind. But these demure rogues cheated and robbed me — plucked my feathers and pruned my scarfs, and I was driven back again to my "merrie men," — whose only fault was making a pleasure of their business.

Soon after this, I made myself prominent in the parish, and obtained a contract for Parochial Conchology — or shells for the paupers. But this even, as I may say, broke down on its first tressels. Having as my first job to inter a workhouse female — Ætat. 96 — and wishing to gain the good opinion of the parish, I had made the arrangements with more than usual decency. The company were at the door. Placing myself at the head, with my best burial face, and my slowest solemnity of step, I set forward, and thanks to my professional deafness — incurred by the constant hammering — I never perceived, till at the church gate, that the procession had not stirred from the door of the house. So good a joke was not lost upon my two Mutes, who made it an excuse for chuckling on after occasions. But to me the consequence was serious. A notion arose amongst the poor that I was too proud to walk along with their remains, and the ferment ran so high, that I was finally compelled to give up my contract.

So much for foot funerals. Now for coach work. The extravagant charges of the jobbers at last induced me to set up a Hearse and Mourning Coaches of my own, with sleek ebony long-tailed horses to match. One of these — the finest of the set — had been sold to me under warranty of being sound and free from vice; and so he was, but the dealer never told me that he had been a charger at Astley's. Accordingly on his very first performance in passing through Bow, — at that time a kind of Fairy Land, — he thought proper, on hearing a showman's trumpet, to dance a cotillon in his feathers! There was nothing to be done but to travel on with three to the next stage, where I sold the caperer at a heavy loss, and to the infinite regret of my merry mourners, with whom this exhibition had made him a great favorite. From this period my business rapidly declined, till instead of five or six demises, on an average, I put in only two defuncts and a half per week.

In this extremity a "black job" was brought to me that promised to make amends for the rest. One fine morning a brace of executors walked into the shop, and handing to me

the following extract of a will, politely requested that I would perform accordingly — and with the pleasing addition that I was to be regardless of the expense. The document ran thus:

FAIRY LAND.

"Item, I will and desire that after death, my body be placed in a strong leaden coffin, the same to be afterwards enclosed in one of oak, and therein my remains to be conveyed handsomely to the village of *** in Norfolk, my birthplace; there to lie, being duly watched, during one night, in the Family mansion now unoccupied, and on the morrow to be carried thence to the church, the coffin being borne by the six oldest resident and decayed parishioners, male or female, and for the same they shall receive severally the sum of five pounds, to be paid on or before the day of interment."

It will be believed that I lost no time in preparing the last solid and costly receptacles for the late Lady Lambert; and the unusual bulk of the deceased seemed in prospective to justify a bill of proportionate magnitude. I was prodigal of

plumes and scutcheons, of staves and scarfs, and mourning coaches; and finally, raising a whole company of black cavalry, we set out by stages, short and sweet, for our destination. I had been prudent enough to send a letter before me to prepare the bearers, and imprudent enough to remit their fees in advance. But I had no misgivings. My men enjoyed the excursion, and so did I. We ate well, drank well, slept well, and expected to be well paid for what was so well done. At the last stage it happened I had rather an intricate reckoning to arrange, by which means being detained a full hour behind the cavalcade, I did not reach the desired village till the whole party had established themselves at the Dying Dolphin; a fact I first ascertained from hearing the merriment of my two mutes in the parlor. Highly indignant at this breach of decorum, I rushed in on the offending couple; and let the Undertaking Reader conceive my feelings, when the following letter was put into my hands, explaining at once the good joke of the two fellows, or rather that of the whole village.

"Sir, — We have sought out the six oldest of the pauper parishioners of this place, namely as follows: —

Margaret Squires, aged 101, blind and bed-rid.
Timothy Topping, aged 98, paralytic and bed-rid.
Darius Watts, aged 95, with loss of both legs.
Barbara Copp, 94 years, born without arms.
Philip Gill, about 81, an Idiot.
Mary Ridges, 79, afflicted with St. Vitus.

Among whom we have distributed your Thirty Pounds according to desire, and for which they are very grateful.

John Gills,
Sam. Rackstrow, } Overseers."

Such were the six bearers who were to carry Lady Lambert to the church, and who could as soon have carried the church to Lady Lambert. To crown all, I rashly listened to the advice of my thoughtless mutes, and in an evil hour deposited the body without troubling any parishioner, old or young, on the subject. The consequence is, the Executors demur to my bill, because I have not acted up to the letter of my instructions. I have had to stand treat for a large party on the road, to sustain all the charges of the black cavalry, and am besides minus thirty pounds in charity, without even the merit of a charitable intention!

LONDON FASHIONS FOR NOVEMBER.

REMARKS.

No season has offered such *variétés* in costume as the early part of the present month. Fancy dresses of the most *outré* description have appeared, even in the streets. Short waists and long, full sleeves and empty, broad skirts and narrow, whole skirts, half skirts, and none at all, have been indifferently worn. For the *Promenade*, rags and tatters of all kinds have been in much favor; very few buttons are worn; and the coats, waistcoats, and pantaloons have been invariably padded, and stuffed with hay or straw. We observed several *exquisites* making morning calls in scarecrow great-coats; the skirts, lappels, collars, and cuffs picturesquely, but not too formally jagged, *à la Vandyke*. The prevailing colors — all colors at once. Wigs have been very general — both *en buzz* and *frizzé;* these have been commonly composed of deal shavings; but in some cases of tow, and sometimes horsehair. For the evening party, a few squibs and crackers are stuck in the *perruque* or hat, and the boots and shoes are polished up with a little pitch or tar; sometimes a Catherine wheel has

been added *en coquarde*. Frills, collars, and ruffles, of *papier coupé*, have entirely superseded those of cambric or lace, and shirts of every description are quite discarded. Paint has been in much request, and ruddle seems to have been preferred to *rouge;* patches are also much worn, not on the countenance, but on the clothes; for these the favorite *matériel* is tartan, plush of any color, or corduroy. Several dandies appeared on the 5th with gloves, but they are not essential requisites to be in the *ton:* canes are discarded; even a riding-whip would be reckoned to evince *mauvais goût*, but a half-penny bunch of matches "*à la main*" is indispensable to a fashionable aspirant. The old practice of being carried abroad in chairs has been universally revived; and it must be confessed that it exhibits the Figure to much advantage.

Amongst the *Nouveautés*, we observed the following *Caractère*, as making a felicitous *début*. The coat was *à la militaire*, of the color formerly so much in vogue under the name of *fumée de Londres*, turned up with *flamme d'enfer*. It was *garni* with very dead gold; and slashed *à l'Espagnole*, back and front. The pantaloons were equally *bizarre;* one leg being composed of Scotch tartan, and the other of blue striped bed-ticking, made very full, *en matelot*, in compliance with the prevailing taste for navals. The wig was made of green and white willow shavings, with a large link for a *queue*, tied on with a *nœud* of red tape. The hat, brown, somewhat darker than the Devonshire beaver, but disinclining to black. It had no brim, and was without a crown. A tarnished badge of the Phœnix Fire Office, on the bust, gave a *distingué* air to the whole Figure, which was going down Bond Street, and excited a sensation quite *à l'envie* by its appearance in the World of Fashion.

N. B. — We are requested to state that the above described figure was entirely invented and manufactured by little Solomon Levy, of Hollywell Street, Strand. who has a variety always on show, about the metropolis.

SUMMER.—A WINTER ECLOGUE.

SCENE. — *A back-parlor at Camberwell.* SYLVANUS *is seated at the breakfast-table, and greeteth his friend* CIVIS.

Syl. A good morrow to you, Friend Civis, and a hearty welcome! How hath sleep dealt with you through the night?

Civ. Purely indeed, and with rare pastoral dreams. I have done nothing but walk through pleasant groves, or sit me down under shady boughs, the whole livelong night. A foretaste, my friend, of the rural delights yet to come, in strolling with you, amongst the dainty shades of this your verdant retreat. How have I yearned all through the month of June, to be a Jack-i'-the-Green again amidst your leaves here! You know my prospect in town.

Syl. Ay, truly; I did once spend, or rather misspend, a whole week there in the dog-days. You looked out opposite on a scorching brick front of six stories, with a south aspect — studded with I know not how many badges of Assurance from fire, and not without need — for the shop windows below seemed all ablaze with geranium-colored silks, at that time the mode, and *flamme d'enfer*. The left-hand shop, next door, was all red, likewise, with regiments of lobsters, in their new uniforms; beyond that, a terrible flaring Red Lion, newly done up with paint. At the next door, a vender of red morocco pocketbooks — my eyes were in a scarlet-fever, the whole time of my sojourning.

Civ. A true picture, I confess. We are, indeed, a little strong in the warm tints; but they give the more zest to your suburban verdure. All the way down overnight, I thought only of the two tall elm-trees beside your gate, and which have always been to my city optics as refreshing as a pair of green spectacles. Surely of all spots I have seen, Camber-

well is the greenest, as the poet says, that ever laid hold of Memory's waist.

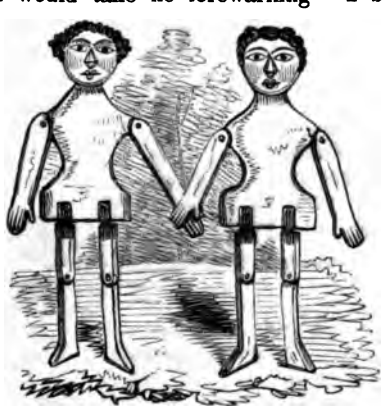
Syl. It hath been greener aforetime. But I pray you sit down and fall to. Shall I help you to some of this relishing salted fish?

Civ. By your good leave, Sylvanus, I will first draw up these blinds. My bedroom, you know, looks out only to the road, and I am longing to help my eyes to a little of what, as a citizen, I may truly call the green fat of nature.

Syl. Nay, Civis — I pray you let the blinds alone. The rolls are getting cold. This ham is excellently well cured, and the eggs are new laid. Come, take a seat.

Civ. I beseech your patience for one moment. There! — the blind is up. What a brave flood of sunshine — and what a glorious blue sky! What a rare dainty day to roam abroad in, dallying with the Dryads! — But what do I behold! O my Sylvanus, the Dryads are stripped of their green kirtles — stark naked! The trees are all bare, God help me! as bare as the "otamies in Surgeons' Hall!"

Syl. You would take no forewarning — I bade you not



BABES IN THE WOOD.

pull up the blind. It was my intent to have broken the truth to you, after you had made a full meal; but now you must to breakfast with what appetite you may!

Civ. As I hope to see Paradise — tnere is not a green bough between this and Peckham!

Syl. No, truly, not a twig! I would not advise any forlorn Babes to die in our woods, for Cock Robin would be painfully perplexed to provide them with a pall. Alas! were a Butterfly to be born in our bowers, there is not a leaf to swaddle it in.

Civ. Miserable man that I am, to have come down so late, or rather that winter should have arrived thus early! Ungenial climate! untimely Boreas.

A NEW LOCUST.

Syl. Blame not Boreas, nor winter neither. Boiling heat had more part than freezing point in this havoc. To think that summer now-a-days should go by steam!

Civ. You speak in Sphynxian riddles! O my Sylvanus, tell me in plain English prose what has become of the green emeralds of the forest?

Syl. Destroyed in one day by a swarm of locusts. Not the locusts of Scripture, such as were eaten by St. John in the wilderness, but a new species. I caught one in the fact, on the very elm-tree you wot of, and which it had stripped to the bone, saving one bough.

Civ. I am glad, with all my heart, that you have him secure, for I delight to gaze on the wonders of nature, even of the destructive kinds. You shall show me your new locust. Of course you thrusted a pin through the body, and fixed it down to a cork after the manner of the entomologists.

Syl. No, truly; for it knocked me down after the manner of the pugilists, and so made its escape.

Civ. How! be they so huge, then? To my fancy, they seem more like flying dragons than locusts.

Syl. It is true, notwithstanding. Some of them which I have seen measured nearly six feet in length; others that were younger, from three to five. One of these last, the Minimi, or small fry, I likewise took captive, though not without some shrewd kicking and biting, and striking with its fore-paws.

Civ. The smallest of animals will do so to escape from bondage. I take for granted you knocked him on the head, for the sake of peace.

Syl. No, indeed. I had not the heart; the visage was so strangely human, — ape or monkey could not look more like a man in the face. And then it cried and whined for all the world like a mere boy.

Civ. It would have been a kind of petty murder to slay him. I do not think I could commit Monkeycide myself. They look, as Lady Macbeth says, so like our Fathers. To kill an ape would plant the whole stings of an apiary in my conscience. I pray you go on with the description.

Syl. Willingly, and according to the system of the great Linnæus. Antennæ or horns he had none, thus differing from the common locust, but in lieu thereof, sundry bunches and tufts of coarse red hair; eyes brown, and tending inwards towards the proboscis or snout. Two fore-legs or arms terminating in ten palpi or feelers, and the same number of toes or claws on the hinder feet. On grasping truncus, or the trunk, it was cased in a loose skin resembling corduroy, the

same being most curiously furnished with sundry bags or pouches, into which, like the provident pelican, it stuffed the forage it had collected from the trees.

Civ. With submission, Sylvanus, to your better judgment, I should have taken this same Locust, from your description, to have been actually a mere human boy.

Syl. Between ourselves, he was — though of what nation or parentage I know not. To use his own heathenish jargon, he was doing "a morning fake on the picking lay for a cove wot add a tea-crib in the monkery."

Civ. A strange gibberish, but I do remember that Peter the Wild Boy was wont to discourse in the same uncouth fashion. Poor savage of the woods! I do feel for his pitiful estate; but what could move him to pluck off all the green emeralds of the Forest?

Syl. To make sham Hyson and mock Souchong. Even in June you would have deemed it was November, there were so many ragged Guys collecting gunpowder. O Civis, thou hast no notion of the tea-trade that hath been carried on in these parts. Many times I have believed myself to be dwelling in Canton, and that my name was Hum. Thrice I have caught myself marvelling at the huge feet of Mrs. S., and have groped behind my nape for the national pigtail.

Civ. Sylvanus, spare me. I have but one green week in the year, and here it is all blotted out of the calendar. I pray you do not jest with me. What hath become of the leaves of yon sycamore?

Syl. Plucked by a Blackamoor, who preferred it to the climbing of chimneys.

Civ. And yonder Ashes, which I could mourn for in appropriate sackcloth?

Syl. Stripped by the select young gentlemen of Seneca-house, who left the politer branches of education for the purpose. Scholars, you know, will play truant gratis, and these had the opportunity of performing it at twopence the hour, One Saturday they did turn their half-holiday into a whole one. and were found by the geographical master picking Chinese Pekoe and Padre on the sloe-bushes and willows of Peckham Rye.

Civ. O my Sylvanus, such then is the cause of the desolation I survey. To think that I may have myself helped

to swallow the verdure that I should now be sitting under. That the green Drudical leaves, instead of clothing the Dryads, should be assisting in the sweeping of my own Kidderminster carpets!

Syl. Verily so it is. The great god Pan is dead, and Pot will reign in his stead.

Civ. Such a misfortune was never before read in a teacup! O my Sylvanus, what is to become of patriotism or love of the country, when the best part of the country is turned to grouts?

Syl. I have heard by way of rumor that Mistress Shakerly of our village attributes her palsy to a dash of aspen in her British Cóngo; indeed there be shrewd doubts abroad whether the great Projector hath been at all reforming by

A GREAT PROJECTOR.

turning over a new leaf. Mr. Fairday, the notable chemist, hath sworn solemnly on his affidavit, that the tea is strongly emetical, having always acted upon his stomach as tea and turn out.

Civ. Of a verity it ought to be tested by the doctors.

Syl. They have tested it, and tasted it to boot. Dr. Budd, the Pennyroyal rofessor of Botany hath ranked it

with the rankest of poisons, after experimenting its destructive virtues on select tea-parties of his relations and friends.

Civ. And I doubt not Dr. Rudd, of the same Royal College, hath added a confirmation to this christening.

Syl. You know the proverb. Doctors' opinions do not keep step, or match together, better than their horses. Dr. Rudd hath given this beverage with cream of tartar and sugar of lead to consumptives, and hath satisfied himself morally and physically that phthisic does not begin with tea.

SLOE POISON.

Civ. Dr. Rudd is an ass! O my Sylvanus, I am sick at heart! Only two days since I did purchase a delectable book of poems, called "Foliage," purposely to read under your trees, but how can I enjoy it, when the very foliage of nature is, as the booksellers say, out of print! "Bare ruined quires where late the sweet birds sung."

Syl. My friend, take comfort. This tea-tray will not be

brought up another year, for the counterfeit herb hath all been seized, and condemned to be burnt in the yard of the Excise.

Civ. I am glad on't, for it will be, as the French say, "a *feu de joie;*" and verily all the little singing-birds ought to collect on the chimney-pots to chant a Tea Deum. In the mean time I must borrow Job's patience under my boils, though they be of the size of kettles, and have boiled away my summer at a gallop. Possibly you may have fewer locusts another season; but by way of precaution, the next time I come down by the stage I shall attend to an old stage direction in Macbeth, namely, "Enter the army with their green boughs in their hands."

THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.

A FARCE.

SCENE.—*A street at the west end of London. Enter* SQUIRE HAMPER *and his* Lady, *personages rather of the rustic order, recently come up from the family seat in Hampshire.*

Squire. Well, ma'am, I hope you nave had shopping enough.

Lady. Almost. Only one more—O, there it is, over the way!

Squire. What, the one yonder? Why, it's all raven gray, picked out with black; and a hatchment over the door. What can you want at an undertaker's?

Lady. An undertaker's!—no such thing. Look at the goods in the window.

Squire. O, shawls and gowns! A foreign haberdasher's, I suppose, and that's the French for it. Mason de Dool?

Lady. Hush! Don't expose your ignorance in the street; everybody knows French at the West End. It means the House of Mourning.

Squire. What, the one mentioned in the Bible?

Lady. No—no—dear me!—no. I tell you it's a mourning establishment.

Squire. O, I understand. The master's dead, and the shop's put into black for him. The last new-fangled mode, I suppose, instead of the old-fashioned one of putting up the shutters.

Lady. Nonsense! It's a shop to buy black things at.

Squire. Humph! And pray, ma'am, what do *you* want with black things! There's nobody dead belonging to us, as I know of, nor like to be.

Lady. Well, and what then? Is there any harm in just looking at their things — for I'm not going to buy. What did we come up to town for?

Squire. Why, for a bit of a holiday, and to see the sights, to be sure.

Lady. Well, and that black shop is one of them, at least for a female. It's quite a new thing, they say, just come over from Paris; and I want to go in and pretend to cheapen something, just out of curiosity.

Squire. Yes, and pay for peeping. For in course you must buy after tumbling over their whole stock.

Lady. By no means — or only some trifle — a penn'orth of black pins — or the like. If I did purchase a black gown, it is always useful to have by one.

Squire. Yes — or a widow's cap. Perhaps, ma'am, you're in hopes?

Lady. La, Jacob, don't be foolish! Many ladies wear black for economy, as well as for relations. But I only want to inspect — for they do say, what with foreign tastiness, and our own modern refinements, there's great improvements in mourning.

Squire. Humph — and I suppose a new-fashioned way of crying.

Lady. New fiddlesticks! It's very well known the Parisians always did outdo us in dress; and in course go into black more elegantly than we do.

Squire. No doubt, ma'am — and fret in a vastly superior manner.

Lady. No, no. I don't say that. Grief's grief all the world over. But as regards costume, the French certainly do have a style that entitles them to set the fashion to us in such matters.

Squire. Can't say. I'm no judge.

Lady. In course not. They're women's matters, and should be left to our sex.

Squire. Well, well, come along then! But stop. Ask your pardon, sir (*to a passenger*), would you oblige me with the English of that Greek or Latin, yonder, under the hatchment?

Stranger. O, certainly — "Mors Janua Vitæ" — let me see — it means, Jane, between life and death.

Squire. Thankee, sir, thankee. I'll do as much for you when you come into our parts. Poor Jane! So it may come, mayhap, to be a real house of mourning after all!

The Squire and his lady cross over the road and enter the shop, where ebony chairs are placed for them by a person in a full suit of sables, very like Hamlet, minus the cloak and the hat and feathers. A young man, also in black, speaks across the counter with the solemn air and tone of a clergyman at a funeral.

May I have the melancholy pleasure of serving you, madam?

Lady. I wish, sir, to look at some mourning.

Shopm. Certainly, by all means. A relict, I presume?

Lady. Yes; a widow, sir. A poor friend of mine, who has lost her husband.

Shopm. Exactly so — for a deceased partner. How deep would you choose to go, ma'am? Do you wish to be very poignant?

Lady. Why, I suppose crape and bombazine, unless they're gone out of fashion. But you had better show me some different sorts.

Shopm. Certainly, by all means. We have a very extensive assortment, whether for family, Court, or complimentary mourning, including the last novelties from the Continent.

Lady. Yes, I should like to see *them*.

Shopm. Certainly. Here is one, ma'am, just imported — a Widow's Silk — *watered*, as you perceive, to match the sentiment. It is called the "Inconsolable;" and is very much in vogue in Paris for matrimonial bereavements.

Squire. Looks rather flimsy, though. Not likely to last long — eh, sir?

Shopm. A little slight, sir — rather a delicate texture. But mourning ought not to last forever, sir.

Squire. No, it seldom does; especially the violent sorts.

Lady, La! Jacob, do hold your tongue; what do you know about fashionable affliction? But never mind him, sir; it's only his way.

Shopm. Certainly — by all means. As to mourning, ma'am, there has been a great deal, a very great deal indeed, this season, and several new fabrics have been introduced, to meet the demand for fashionable tribulation.

Lady. And all in the French style?

Shopm. Certainly — of course, ma'am. They excel in the *funèbre.* Here, for instance, is an article for the deeply afflicted. A black crape, expressly adapted to the profound style of mourning, — makes up very sombre and interesting.

Lady. I dare say it does, sir.

Shopm. Would you allow me, ma'am, to cut off a dress?

Squire. You had better cut *me* off first.

Shopm. Certainly, sir — by all means. Or, if you would prefer a velvet — ma'am —

Lady. Is it proper, sir, to mourn in velvet?

Shopm. O, quite! — certainly. Just coming in. Now, here is a very rich one — real Genoa — and a splendid black. We call it the Luxury of Woe.

Lady. Very expensive, of course?

Shopm. Only eighteen shillings a yard, and a superb quality; in short, fit for the handsomest style of domestic calamity.

Squire. Whereby, I suppose, sorrow gets more superfine as it goes upwards in life?

Shopm. Certainly — yes, sir — by all means — at least, a finer texture. The mourning of poor people is very coarse — very — quite different from that of persons of quality. Canvas to Crape, sir!

Lady. To be sure it is! And as to the change of dress, sir, I suppose you have a great variety of half-mourning?

Shopm. O, infinite, — the largest stock in town! Full, and half, and quarter, and half-quarter mourning, shaded off, if I may say so, like an India-ink drawing, from a grief *prononcé* to the slightest *nuance* of regret.

Lady. Then, sir, please to let me see some Half Mourning.

Shopm. Certainly. But the gentleman opposite superintends the Intermediate Sorrow Department.

Squire. What, the young fellow yonder in pepper-and-salt?

Shopm. Yes, sir; in the suit of gray. (*Calls across.*) Mr. Dawe, show the Neutral Tints!

[*The Squire and his Lady cross the shop and take seats* vis-à-vis; *Mr. Dawe, who affects the pensive rather than the solemn,*

Shopm. You wish to inspect some Half Mourning, madam?

Lady. Yes — the newest patterns.

Shopm. Precisely — in the second stage of distress. As such, ma'am, allow me to recommend this satin — intended for grief when it has subsided, — alleviated you see, ma'am, from a dead black to a dull lead color!

Squire. As a black horse alleviates into a gray one, after he 's clipped!

Shopm. Exactly so, sir. A Parisian novelty, ma'am. It 's called "Settled Grief," and is very much worn by ladies of a certain age, who do not intend to embrace Hymen a second time.

Squire. Old women, mayhap, about seventy.

Shopm. Exactly so, sir, — or thereabouts. Not but what some ladies, ma'am, set in for sorrow much earlier; — indeed, in the prime of life: and for such cases, it 's very durable wear.

Lady. Yes; it feels very stout.

Shopm. But perhaps, madam, that is too *lugubre.* Now here is another — not exactly black, but shot with a warmish tint, to suit a woe moderated by time. We have sold several pieces of it. That little *nuance de rose* in it — the French call it, a Gleam of Comfort — is very attractive.

Squire. No doubt; and would be still more taking, if so be it was violet color at once, like the mourning of the Chinese.

Shopm. Yes, sir. I believe that is the fashionable color at Pekin. Now here, ma'am, is a sweet pretty article, quite new. A morning dress for the Funereal Promenade. The French ladies go in them to *Père la Chaise.*

Squire. What 's that — a chaise and pair?

Shopm. Excuse me; no, sir. By your leave it 's a scene of rural interment, near Paris. A black cypress sprig, you see, ma'am, on a stone-color ground, harmonizes beautifully

with the monuments and epitaphs. We sold two this very morning — one to Norwood, and one to Kensal Green. We consider it the happiest pattern of the season.

Squire. Yes; some people are very happy in it, no doubt.

Shopm. No doubt, sir. There's a charm in melancholy, sir. I'm fond of the pensive myself. But possibly, madam, you would prefer something still more in the transition state, as we call it, from grave to gay. In that case, I would recommend this lavender Ducape, with only just a *souvenir* of sorrow in it — the slightest tinge of mourning, to distinguish it from the garb of pleasure. Permit me to put aside a dress for you.

Lady. Why, no — not at present. I am not going into mourning myself; but a friend, who has just been left with a large family —

Shopm. O, I understand; and you desire to see an appropriate style of costume for the juvenile branches, when sorrow their young days has shaded. Of course, a milder degree of mourning than for adults. Black would be precocious. This, ma'am, for instance — a dark pattern on gray; an interesting dress, ma'am, for a little girl, just initiated in the vale of tears.

Squire. Poor thing!

Shopm. Precisely so, sir, — only eighteen pence a yard, ma'am — and warranted to wash. Possibly you would require the whole piece?

Lady. Why no — I must first consult the mamma. And that reminds me to look at some widow's caps.

Shopm. Very good, ma'am. The Coiffure department is backwards — if you would have the goodness to step that way.

The lady, followed by the squire, walks into a room at the back of the shop; the walls are hung with black, and on each of the three sides is a looking-glass, in a black frame, multiplying infinitely the reflections of the widows' caps, displayed on stands on the central table. A show-woman in deep mourning is in attendance.

Show. Your melancholy pleasure, ma'am?

Lady. Widow's caps.

Squire. Humph! — that's plump anyhow!

Show. This is the newest style, ma'am —

Lady. Bless me! for a widow! — Isn't it rather — you know, rather a little —

Squire. Rather frisky in its frilligigs!

Show. Not for the mode, ma'am. Affliction is very much modernized, and admits more *goût* than formerly. Some ladies indeed for their morning grief wear rather a plainer cap, — but for evening sorrow, this is not at all too *ornée.* French taste has introduced very considerable alleviations — for example, the *sympathizer* —

Squire. Where is he?

Show. This muslin *ruche,* ma'am, instead of the plain band.

Lady. Yes; a very great improvement, certainly.

Show. Would you like to try it, ma'am?

Lady. No, not at present. I am only inquiring for a friend — Pray, what are those?

Show. Worked handkerchiefs, ma'am. Here is a lovely pattern — all done by hand, — an exquisite piece of work —

Squire. Better than a noisy one!

Show. Here is another, ma'am, — the last novelty. The *Larmoyante* — with a fringe of artificial tears, you perceive, in mock pearl. A sweet pretty idea, ma'am.

Squire. But rather scrubby, I should think, for the eyes.

Show. O dear, no, sir! — if you mean wiping. The wet style of grief is quite gone out — quite!

Squire. O, and a dry cry is the genteel thing. But come, ma'am, come, or we shall be too late for the other Exhibitions.

The Squire and his Lady leave the shop; on getting into the street, he turns round, and takes a long, last look at the premises.

Squire. Humph! And so that's a Mason de Dool! Well, if it's all the same to you, ma'am, I'd rather die in the country, and be universally lamented, after the old fashion — for, as to London, what with the new French modes of mourning, and the "Try Warren" style of blacking the premises, it do seem to me that before long, all sorrow will be sham Abram, and the House of Mourning a regular Farce!

BID ME DISCOURSE.

THE ELLAND MEETING.

Benedict. "Here 's a dish I love not: I cannot endure my lady Tongue."
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

"Do you hear the rumor? They say the women are in insurrection, and mean to make a ——." — THE WOMAN'S PRIZE.

"Enter Rumor painted full of tongues." — K. HENRY IV.

"In a word, the Tartars came on." — ROBINSON CRUSOE.

IN my M. S. days, — and like many bookish bachelors of the same standing, I was a member of a private literary society, with a name whereof I only remember that it began in Greek and ended in English. This reunion was framed on the usual plan of such institutions; except that the gallantry

of the founders had ruled that half the members might be of the female sex, and accordingly amongst our "intellectual legs," we numbered a fair proportion of the hose that are metaphorically blue. We assembled weekly at the house of some Fellow that had a house, where an original essay was first read by the author, and then submitted to discussion, much as a school-boy first spins his top and then lays it down to be pegged at by the rest of the company. The subjects, like Sir Roger de Coverley's picture, generally left a great deal to be said on both sides, nor were there wanting choppers, not to say hackers of logic, to avail themselves of the circumstance; and as we possessed, amongst others, a brace of Irish barristers, a Quaker, a dissenter to everything, an author who spoke volumes, a geologist who could find sermons in stones, and one old man eloquent, surnamed for his discursiveness the rambler, we had usually what Bubb Doddington has called "a multiplicity of talk."

It is worthy of record, however, and especially as running counter to the received opinion of the loquacity of the sex, that no female member was ever known to deliver or attempt to deliver a sentence on the subject in debate. Now and then, perchance, a short clearing cough would flatter us that we were going to benefit by feminine taste and delicacy of sentiment; but the expectation invariably fell to the ground, and we might as well have expected an opinion to transpire from the wax-work of Mrs. Salmon or Madame Tussaud. I have since learned, it is true, from one of the maturest of the she fellows, that she did once actually contemplate a few words to the matter in hand, but that at the very first stitch she lost her needle, by which she meant her tongue, and then in seeking for her needle she lost the thread of her ideas, and so gave up the task, she said, as not being "woman's work."

It would seem, therefore, that a set discourse in company is altogether incompatible with the innate diffidence and shrinking timidity of the sex. Milton, indeed, makes this silent modesty a peculiar characteristic of perfect womanhood, as evinced in the demeanor of "accomplished Eve." To mark it the more strongly, he liberally endows our general mother with fluency of speech in her colloquies with Adam, so as even to "forget all time" in conversing with him; whereas in the presence of a third party, — the Angel Visitor for in-

stance, whom she less bids than makes welcome to her dessert, — she seldom opens her lips. Nor is this an overstrained picture: the same matronly, or spinsterly reserve having survived the Fall, and the confusion of Babel, and the more womanly of her daughters, however good at what the Scotch call "a two-handed crack," in a corner or behind a curtain will still evince a paradisaical hesitation, amounting to an impediment, in addressing the most limited audience. In fact up to a comparatively recent period, the Miltonic theory was practically acknowledged and acted upon, at the theatre, the female characters of the Drama being always represented by proxies of men or boys.

Even in the present age, the *début* of an actress, having so many "lengths" to deliver in public, is reckoned one of the severest ordeals that womanly modesty can undergo. The celebrated Mrs. Siddons described it as a "fiery trial," — a

A FIRST APPEARANCE ON ANY STAGE.

"terrible moment," — and any play-goer who has witnessed the first appearance of a young lady on any stage will easily give credit for its agonies. The late Mrs. —— once described

to me very vividly her sufferings on a like awful occasion: — "the voice that would not come, and the tremor that would not go — the frame inclining to sink, and the head determined to swim, — the distinct consciousness of the presence of the body, with the indistinct impression of the absence of the mind. Thank Heaven," she concluded, "that I had not to 'extort' the people, as Mawworm calls it, out of my own head — that I had not to furnish the speech, as well as the courage to utter it; for I protest that I could not have put together a sentence of my own, for the saving of my life!"

With such experience and impressions of the inaptitude of the sex for popular orators, my profound amazement may be conceived when on lately glancing over the columns of a morning journal, my eye was arrested by the extraordinary heading of a

Public Meeting of Women against the Poor Laws.

In the first tumult of my agitation, I pitched my Morning Herald, where Parson Adams threw his Æschylus, namely, behind the fire; but the very next instant, with a vague notion that it would *blow* up, I snatched it out again. I am not certain, — being in weak health and spirits, and more than commonly nervous, —that I did not cry murder! — My first sensation, indeed was a physical one, a complication of acuteness of earache, with the numbness of lockjaw: — and then came the moral consciousness of some stunning domestic calamity, that seemed dilating every instant from a family into a national visitation. In fact, I recollect nothing at all approaching the first bodily shock, except once, on the explosion of some neighboring powder-mills, when a few highly condensed moments of intense silence were followed by the sudden burst of an imaginary peal, from a bell assembly of all the steeples in England; nor can I recall any experience equal to my mental horror afterwards, unless a certain delirious dream of being run away with by four gray mares, in the York mail!

It was a considerable time before I could muster resolution to peruse the speeches, the tone of which my prophetic soul forestalled as less resembling the notes of the feminine dulcimer, or piano, or hurdy-gurdy, than those of the masculine brazen trumpet. And should this seem a *harsh* anticipation, it must be remembered that I had been prepared by no pre-

vious rehearsals for such a burst of female oratory. If I had met with a paragraph hinting that certain females had been observed in rough weather, mysteriously haunting the sea-beach, say of Scarborough for instance, and gesticulating, as if on speaking terms with the billows, my classical reminiscences might have recalled the system by which Demosthenes braced himself against the murmurs and roarings of a popular assembly — and I might have comprehended that the hoarse waves were resorted to as oratorical *breakers-in.* But there was no such warning; and consequently the report came upon me with all the startling suddenness and crash of a seamstress's splitting a piece of stout calico. There was something astounding in the bare idea of a female voice, so commonly requiring a high pressure to induce it to sing in private circles, volunteering in public assembly to spout! A maiden speech even in a man is apt to excite a maidenly fever of nervousness; and many a rough and tough old sea-commander, who would have returned a broadside without flinching, has been converted physiognomically into an admiral of the blue, white, and red, and has found a bung in his speaking-trumpet, on having to reply to a volley of thanks. The very subject, so steeped in party spirit, — for alas! it is undeniable that the woes and wants of the poor have become a party question — the very subject so steeped in party spirit, always a raw unrectified article, and at the present time distilled particularly above proof, seemed peculiarly unfit for womanly lips. In short I concluded *primâ facie*, that a female who could come forward, without a rehearsal all along shore, or practise on provincial boards, as a public orator, and on political topics, must needs be what some old writer calls "a mankind woman," — and akin to the Hannah Snells and Mary Ann Talbots, that have heretofore enlisted in our army and navy. How far I was justified in these forebodings a few extracts will serve to show.

"Mrs. Susan Fearnley having been voted into the chair, opened the business of the meeting by exhorting the females present *to take the question of a repeal of this bill into their own hands*, and not to rely on the exertions of others, *least of all on the House of Commons*, but at once to assert *the dignity and equality of the sex*, and as the chief magistrate of the realm was now a femal to approach her *respectfully*, and lay

their grievances before her; and should their application be unsuccessful, she would then call upon them to resist the enforcement of this cruel law, *even unto the death* — (loud cheers). Mrs. Grasby said, the new poor law was not concocted by men, but by fiends in the shape of men; it had been hatched and bred in the bottomless pit — (cheers). She could wish the authors of this law to be sent to St. Helena, where Napoleon was sent to, and remain till their bodies were wet with the dew of heaven, and their hair as long as eagles' feathers. She would oppose that law, and she called upon her sisters now before her to follow her example — (tremendous cheering). Mrs. Hanson alluded to the personal disfiguration of the hair cutting off, which excited much disapprobation; this was followed by a description of the grogram gowns of sholdy and paste in which the inmates of the bastiles are attired." The address said, "We approach your Majesty, and pray that you will exercise your prerogative, and remove from your councils those heartless men who are attempting to place us under this horrible law. *We beg leave to remind your Majesty that allegiance is due only when protection is extended to the subject.*

"Signed on behalf of the meeting,

"SUSAN FEARNLEY, *Chairwoman.*"

And the report said, "Thanks were then voted with loud cheering to Earl Stanhope, Mr. J. Fielden, to the Chairwoman, Mrs. Grasby, and Mrs. Hanson, for their eloquent speeches, and to the other females who had got up and managed the meeting. Three groans were then given for the Whigs and all who support the poor-law bill."

I have purposely omitted an astounding declaration of the wives and mothers in the address, about their daughters, hoping that it is only founded on local scandal; — and now, if such another merry meeting may be wished, what right-thinking Benedict or Bachelor but will join with me and Dogberry in a "God prohibit it?" When the Steam Washing Company was first established, there was a loud and shrill outcry against what were facetiously called the cock Laundresses, who were roundly accused of a shameful invasion of woman's provinces, and favored with many sneering recommendations to wear mob caps, and go in stuff petticoats and

pattens. But if Hercules with the distaff be but a sorry spectacle, surely Omphale with the club cuts scarcely a better figure. The he-creatures may now fairly retort, that it is as consistent with manhood to go out washing, as for womanhood to do chairing at a public meeting. If it be out of character for a fellow in a coat and continuations to be firsting and seconding linen, it is equally anomalous for a creature in petticoats to be firsting and seconding political resolutions; and for my own part, as a matter of taste, I would rather see a Gentleman blowing up a copper flue, than a Lady blowing up the foulness of the Poor Law.

In the mean time, there is reason to apprehend that the infection is gaining ground; the last post having brought me the following letter on the subject from a country correspondent.

To the Editor of Hood's Own, &c., &c.

HONORED SIR,

I don't know whether you be married, or likely to be in the way of courting, but whether or not, most likely you have a mother, or sister, or aunt, or she-cousin, or some such connection of the female sex. As such will be interested in the following, as a matter that concerns us all, and particularly men like myself of a quiet turn and domestic habits.

By station I am only a plain family man in the farming line, but to my misfortune, as turns out, I am locally situated in the county of York, and what's worse, a great deal too nigh Elland, and where the women got up the spouting meeting again the poor laws that made such a noise in the country. I'm not a political character myself, and as such have nothing to object for or against public meetings and speechifyings so long as it's confined to the male kind, but with as good nerves as most men that can ride to hounds, nothing since incendiarism has given them such a shock as the breaking out of female elocution, for in course like the rick burnings and the influenzy or any other new kick, it will go through the whole country. My own house has catched for one, and I will inform you the symptoms it begins with. The Elland Meeting, you see, was on a Tuesday, and between you and me and the post, it's my belief that my mistress was present, though she do say it were a visit to her mother. Otherwise I cannot think what could put her teeth into her head on the

Wednesday for the first time, by which I mean to say her spelling for a new set, if it was not to assist her parts of speech. Agricultural distress has made gold much more scarce among farmers than formerly, and I don't mind saying it's more than I could afford comfortably at most times to lay out twenty guineas in ivory for the sake of a correct pronouncing. However, I made no remark, except to myself, namely, that they was n't wanted to keep her tongue between. For my own part I have always found she could speak plain enough, and particularly when I could n't — by reason of dining at the ordinary on market-days and the like. Anyway she always contrived to speak her mind, but ever since the meeting she seems to have had more mind to speak; for instance, a long confabbing with every beggar at the gate, instead of sending off as formerly with nothing but a flea in their ear, as the saying is. In short, many more things struck me as suspicious, and amongst the rest, her making an errand again to Elland for a piece of stuff and a little fustian — in pint of fact, that visit seemed to set her more agog than before, so as to start a new notion of going up to London about Betsy's impediment, and says she, I can kill two birds, and get my new teeth at the same time. If that don't look oratorical, thinks I to myself, then I don't know what does. However, last Sunday was a week lets the whole cat out of the bag, as the saying is, as near as may be as follows. It was just after dinner, and only our two selves quite domestically, Betsy being gone to grandmother's, and me going to take my first glass of wine, and so as usual, I nodded to my good woman, with a 'here's to ye Kate!' according to custom — when lo! and behold, up jumps madam regularly on her legs, opening like a hound that has just hit the scent, and begins a return thanks, and delivery of sentiments and so forth, before I knew where I was. Where she got the knack of it without practice, Lord knows, for it's more than ever I was competent to, as for instance, when I've been publicly drunk at our Coursing Club, and the like. However, she was five good minutes long afore she broke down, or recollected herself, I don't know which, and I'm free to say, left me so dumbfounded in a mizmaze that I had n't presence of mind to argue the point. However, before going to bed, I thought best to open gently on the subject, but, as might be expected, the more we differed, the more we

debated, which in course was just what madam wanted, till at long and at last, seeing that I was only being practised upon, like Betsy's piano, I thought proper to adjourn myself off to roost, but from the nature of my dreams, have reason to think she continued the argument in her sleep.

And now, honored sir, what is to be done to stop such a national calamity as hangs over us like a thunder-cloud, unless it 's put down by the powerful voice of the public press? Not wishing to connect myself with politics, which all newspapers are more or less inclined to, and your periodical being mentioned to me by our doctor as an impartial vehicle, am induced to the liberty of this communication, to be made use of at your discretion. My own sentiments are very strong on the subject, but more than I can express by penmanship. We have a saying here in the north about a crowing hen, that seems quite pat to the case. And if you keep live-stock, what can cut a

AUDIENCE FIT, THOUGH FEW.

foolisher figure than a great gawksome hen, leaving her eggs to addle in the nest, or her chicks, if so be, to the care of the kite, to go a spurring and sparring about the yard with her hackle up, and trying to crow like a cock of the walk? So

it is with the mistress of a house leaving her helpless babes, or, what is worse, her grown-up girls, to their own cares and looking after, to go ranting and itineranting all over the country, henpecking at the heads of the nation, and cackling up on tables, or in wagons, or on the hustings. It's my opinion nature intended the whole sex to be more backward in coming forward, let alone tattle at tea-drinkings, or gossiping at christenings, or laying-in, but to be totally unaccustomed to public speaking. As to state affairs, some do think there's more talking than doing already, and in course it will be no cure for it, to match the House of Lords with a House of Ladies. In the mean time, I don't mean to come down the money for the new teeth or the impediment, and hoping that the speeches at Elland may prove the last dying speeches of female elocution,

I remain, Honored Sir,
Your very humble Servant to command,
RICHARD PAYNE PILGRIM.

NEW HARMONY.

"I'll have five hundred voices of that sound."
CORIOLANUS.

A FEW days since, while passing along the Strand, near Exeter Hall, my ear was suddenly startled by a burst of sound from the interior of that building, — a noise which, according to a bystander, proceeded from the "calling out of the vocal Militia."

This explanation rather exciting than allaying my curiosity, induced me to make further inquiries into the matter; when it appeared that the Educational Committee had built a plan, on a German foundation, for the instruction of the middle and lower orders in Music, and that a Mr. Hullah was then engaged in drilling one of the classes in singing.

As an advocate for the innocent amusement of the lower

classes, and the people in general, the news gave me no small pleasure; and even the distant chorus gratified my ear more than a critical organ ought to have been pleased by the im-

HULLAH-BALOO.

perfect blending of a number of unpractised voices of very various qualities, and as yet not quite so tunable as the hounds of Theseus in giving tongue. Indeed, one or two voices seemed also to be "out of their time" in the very beginning of their apprenticeship. But to a patriotic mind, there was a moral sweetness in the music that fully atoned for any vocal irregularities, and would have reconciled me even to an orchestra of Dutch Nightingales. To explain this feeling, it must be remembered that no Administration but one which intended to be popular and paternal would ever think of thus encouraging the exercise of the Vox Populi; and especially of teaching the million to lift up their voices *in concert*, for want of which, and through discordances amongst themselves,

their political choruses have hitherto been so ineffective. It was evident, therefore, that our Rulers seriously intended, not merely to imbue the people with musical knowledge, but also to give them good cause to sing, — and of course hoped to lend their own ministerial ears to songs and ballads very different from the satirical *chansons* that are chanted on the other side of the English Channel. In short, we are all to be as merry and as tuneful as Larks, and to enjoy a Political and Musical Millennium!

This idea so transported me, that, like a grateful canary, I incontinently burst into a full-throated song, and with such thrills and flourishes as recurred to me, commenced a Bravura, which in a few minutes might have attracted an audience more numerous than select, if my performance had not been checked in its very preludium by an occurrence peculiarly characteristic of a London street. It was, in fact, the abrupt putting to me of a question, which some pert cockney of the Poultry first addressed to the unfledged, —

"DOES YOUR MOTHER KNOW YOU'RE OUT?"

VAN DEMON'S LAND.

A LETTER FROM A SETTLER FOR LIFE

IN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.

To Mary, at No. 45 Mount Street, Grosvenor Square.

DEAR MARY, —

Littel did I Think wen I advertisd in the Tims for annother Plaice of taking wan in Vandemin's land. But so it his and hear I am amung Kangerooses and Savidges and other Forriners. But government offering to Yung Wimmin to Find them in Vittles and Drink and Close and Husbands was turms not to be sneazed at, so I rit to the Outlandish Seckertary and he was so Kind as Grant.

Wen this cums to Hand go to Number 22 Pimpernel Plaice And mind and go betwixt Six and sevin For your own

Sake cos then the fammilys Having Diner give my kind love to betty Housmad and Say I am safe of my Jurney to Forrin parts And I hope master as never Mist the wine and brought Them into trubble on My accounts. But I did not Like to leav for Ever And Ever without treeting my Frends and feller servents and Drinking to all their fairwells. In my Flury wen the Bell rung I forgot to take My own Key out of missis Tekaddy but I hope sum wan had the thought And it is in Good hands but shall Be obleeged to no. Lickwise thro my Lones of Sperrits my lox of Hares quite went out of My Hed as was prommist to Be giv to Gorge and Willum and the too Futmen at the too Next dores But I hop and Trust betty pacifid them with lox of Her hone as I begd to Be dun wen I rit Her from dover. O Mary wen I furst see the dover Wite clifts out of site wat with squemishnes and Felings I all most repentid givin Ingland warning And had douts if I was goin to better my self. But the stewerd was verry kind tho I could make Him no returns xcept by Dustin the ship for Him And helpin to wash up his dishes. Their was 50 moor Young Wimmin of us and By way of passing tim We agread to tell our Histris of our selves taken by Turns But they all turned out Alick we had All left on account of Testacious masters And crustacious Mississis and becos the Wurks was to much For our Strenths but betwixt yew and Me the reel truths was beeing Flirted with and unprommist by Perfidus yung men. With sich exampils befour there Minds I wunder sum of them was unprudent enuff to Lissen to the Salers whom are coverd with Pitch but famus for Not stiking to there Wurds. has for Me the Mate chose to be verry Partickler wan nite Setting on a Skane of Rops but I giv Him is Anser and lucky I did for Am infourmd he as Got too more Marred Wives in a state of Biggamy thank Goodness wan can marry in new Wurlds without mates. Since I have bean in My pressent Sitiation I have had between too aud three offers for My Hands and expex them Evry day to go to fistcufs about Me this is sum thing lick treeting Wimmin as Wimmin ought to be treetid Nun of your sarsy Buchers and Backers as brakes there Prommissis the sam as Pi Crust wen its maid Lite and shivvry And then laffs in Your face and say they can hav anny Gal they lick round the Square. I dont menshun nams but Eddard as drives the Fancy bred will no Wat I mean.

As soon as ever the Botes rode to Land I dont agrivate the Truth to say their was haf a duzzin Bows apeace to Hand us out to shoar and sum go so Far as say they was offered to thro Specking Trumpits afore they left the Shipside. Be that as it May or may Not I am tould We maid a Verry pritty site all Wauking too and too in our bridle wite Gownds with the Union Jacks afore Us to pay humbel Respex to kernel Arther who behaived verry Gentlemanny and Complementid us on our Hansom apearances and Purlitely sed he Wisht us All in the United States. The Salers was so gallaunt as giv three chears we. We left there Ship and sed if so be they had not Bean without Canons they Wood have salutid us all round. Servents mite live Long enuff in Lonnon without Being sich persons of Distinkshun. For my hone Part, cumming amung strangers and Pig in Pokes, prudence Dicktatid not to be askt out At the verry furst cumming in howsumever All is setteld And the match is aproved off by Kernel Arther and the Brightish government, who as agread to giv me away. thems wat I call Honners as we used to Say at wist. Wan thing in My favers was my voice and my noing the song of the Plane Gould Ring witch the Van Demons had never Herd afore I wood recumfnend all as meens cumming to Bring as menny of the fashingable Songs and Ballets as they Can — and to get sum nolliges of music as fortnately for me I was Abel to by meens of praxtising on Missis Piney Forty wen the fammily Was at ramsgit. of Coarse you and betty Will xpect me to indulge in Pearsonallitis about my intendid to tell Yew wat he is lick he is Not at All lick Eddard as driv the Fancy bred and Noboddy else yew No. I wood send yew His picter Dun by himself only its no more lick Him then Chork is to Cheas. In spit of the Short Tim for Luv to take Roots I am convinst he is verry Passionet of coarse As to his temper I cant Speek As yet as I hav not Tride it. O mary littel did I think too Munth ago of sending yew Brid Cake and Weddin favers wen I say this I am only Figgering in speach for Yew must Not look for sich Things from this Part of the Wurld I dont mean this by Way of discurridgement Wat I meen to say is this If so be Yung Wimmin prefers a state of Silly Bessy they Had better remane ware they was Born but as far as Reel down rite Coarting and no nonsens is concarnd This is the Plaice for my Munny a Gal has only to

cum out hear And theirs duzzens will jump at her like Cox at Gusberris. it will Be a reel kindnes to say as Much to Hannah at 48 and Hester Brown and Peggy Oldfield and partickler poor Charlotte they needent Fear about being Plane for Yew may tell Them in this land Faces dont make stumblin Blox and if the Hole cargo was as uggly As sin Lots wood git marrid. Deer Mary if so Be you feel disposd to cum Out of Your self I will aford evry Falicity towards your hapiness. I dont want to hurt your Felines but since the Cotchman as giv yew up I dont think Yew have annother String to your Bo to say nothink of Not being so young As yew was Ten yeer ago and

RING-DOVES.

faces Will ware ou as well as scrubbin orushes. theirs a verry nice yung man is quit a Willin to offer to Yew providid you cum the verry Next vessle for He has Maid up his mind not to Wait beyond the Kupid and Sikey. as the ship is on the Pint of Saling I cant rite Moor at pressent xcept for them has as shily shalying sweat harts to Thretten with cumming to Vandemins And witch will soon sho wether its Cubbard love or true Love I hav seen Enuff of Bows droping in at supertime and falling out the next morning after borrowin Wans wags. Wen yew see anny Frends giv my Distant love to Them and say My being Gone to annother wurld dont impear my Memmery but I often Thinks of Number 22 and the two Next Dores. yew may Disclose my matterymonial Prospex to betty as we hav always had a Deal of Confidens. And I remane with the Gratest asurance Your affexionat Frend

Susan Gale — as his to be Simco.

P. S. Deer mary my Furst Match beeing broke off short hope Yew will not take it Ill but I have Marrid the yung Man as was to Hav waited for Yew but As yew hav never seen one Annother trusts yew will Not take Him to hart or abrade by Return of Postesses he has behaved Perfickly honnerable And has got a verry United frend of his Hone to be attacht to Yew in lew of Him. adew.

AN IRISH REBELLION.

It is impossible to divine for what reason all mention of the outbreak alluded to in the following letter has been suppressed in the daily papers of either kingdom; but whatever may have been the purpose of the journalists, the Rebellion described is, in the phrase of the *Times*, "A Great Fact." — *Ed.*

"*To Miss* * * * * * * *Shrewsbury, Shropshire.*

"My dear Jane, —

"This cums hopin your well and cumfortable, which is more then I am or ever hope to be in this distracted country. Lord forgive me for repinin. But I wish I had married any wheres except to the Emerald Jem. My nerves is literally shook to peaces, for won mite as well xpect to sleep in Sow Ameriky without Rockin by erthquakes, as to live in Ireland without Agitashuns. Its always in Convulshuns like a teething Babby!

"Sich mobbins & publick meetins, & violent speechifyins witch encourages murderin English, & marchins & counter marchins, & bonfires without Guys to them — & blowin Horns, & Irish thretnin letters from men as cant rite to men as cant read. Sich squablings between Repeelers & No Repeelers, & Romans & Protestants, and exclusiv dealin, not like Mrs. Mullins at wist as used to deal all the Honners to herself, but not byin nuthin from noboddy except your own perswashun. Sich searchin for Harms & many factering Pikes and Repeel Wardins & callin, hard names, big Beggers, &

mity big liers, and a surplus of rough uns, and a lion in blood Langwage & religun, — and as they 've bilt a grate Hall for Irish Concilliashun there will be fighten of course. In witch case Lord help us, for when it comes to Battle royal, an Irish Justis always throws up his commission & his Hat along with it rayther then keep the peace! O Jane never never never marry into Ireland. Singleness is better than Dublin.

"Thank goodness I 'me not a Saxon but from Shropsheer, or my days would n't be long in the Land. Wat the Saxons has dun to displease the Irish xcept desertin from Boney at the Battle of Lipsick is more then I know, but they are as bitter as Bark agin the hole race. This very blessid mornin there was poor Patrick Maguire the tailor was shillallid amost into nine parts of a man for only havin a peace of cloth in his winder marked Saxony superfine. Its shockin to stir up sich nashunal anymositties between cristians. For my own part altho I am a English woman I dont hate Ireland and indeed was once quite attached to the country being stuck fast up to my middle in a Bog.

"Then theres party cullers. Sum of them runnin as mad at Orange as a bull at scarlet, because King William of Orange was a Dutchman and wanted to introdeuce Hollands instid of Wisky. And so they must upset poor Widder Grady & her baskit into the gutter for sellin Oranges instied of Greens & others agin cant abide Green — so you cant even suit your complexion xcept by goin in Newtral Tint like a Quaker. But that cums of leaving my own country for an Island surrounded as I may say with hot Warter and witch sum mornin I may get up and find repeeled off to the Continent and anext to France. Or wats wus simpathisin off to Ameriky. But before sich a repeel I hope I shall be Repeeld to my grave! As may be I may be eithir pitch forkt to deth by a Protistant rebel or shot by a Poppish one with a barrelful of slugs. But who can expect behaving as armless as Doves as Doctor Watts says in a country where a Pigeon House means a place full of sogers.

"As to my Husband insted of bein a cumfit in my allarms hes quite the Reverse, wat with his repeel pollytics & his Irish blud which is so easy set up he never goes out to spend an evenin & meet his frends but I look to see him cum home with a black eye or a pugnashus Nose, — if he ant sent sud-

den to heaven with a holy Head. Witch is rather alarmin for if thats his Friendship wat will his love be if it ever cums to Blows. Praps its sumthing in the soil for they do say you may no a real Irish tater by its havin black eyes. How sumever fighten & shillallyin is meat & drink to the Natives. But its his pollyticks as scars me out of my sensis. O if you you could only hear him talk of goin to the Skaffold as he will sum day without his Hod — & crackin every Crown in the Wurld for the cause of Irish poverty he says is soverins raining over it, in short sich speeches as must be Ketchd up, for State Persecutions, if luckly there wasnt so menny all talking in the same stile, for Strong languige is one of their Weaknesses. And witch is why they praps want to have a Parliment of their own, for as to the Hous of Communs they say theres nothin Irish about it xcept a Speaker as dont speak. And so I supose they will have a Parliment in Collige Green, or else the Fifteen Akers witch is a better Place to pair off in. For you know theyre dredful Duelists & always so reddy for challengin, if you only look hard at a deaf Irishman he considders it a callin out. Not but wat theyre a generus Pepel otherways as well as in fighting and would give away their last Rap in the wurld wether in munny or a stick, & whether a stick with a stick or with a pike. And I must say very gallant to the sects, even poor Thady when he's overcum by his Licker and sees dubble, Oh Nelly, says he, its a trate entirely it is to see two of your swate purty Faces insted of one. Witch is all very well in the way of complementin but whats it all Wuth when it cums to Pollyticks if he wants to repuddiate me like an Amerikan Det, and repeel all Unions between the English & the Irish. But a Marrige is a Marrige, & nayther him nor Mister O Daniel O Connel with Mr. Ray and Mr. Steel into the Bargin can get quit of three Axes & the Halter. Witch reminds me of the prejudis agin English males, I mean to say the Crole Coaches. Wat I suspects they wants is busses to jine on to their Blunders. For theres shockin reports about a Genral risin with the lark some mornin in the disturbed distrix. I supose the Peep o'day Boys, & sum plot gettin up. There certainly has been seizers of arms, & sum talk of Rebecca cummin over to giv lessons in levellin Pikes, & they do say theres an unkommun stickin of Pigs by way of practisin for civil War. Likewise Rock letters, & as

to land you mite as well take Leasis of the Goodwin Sands. There is poor Patrick Dolan, but I must call him Pat in futer for they 've burnt his rick. Well he 's as good as killd, for he 's a prescribed man. And all for wat? Why for havin a cow as would n't toss up with the Procter for the Tithes. To be shure as Thady says there 's a Commisshun appinted to enquire how Irishmen hold their own, But wat 's the use of a Commisshun to inquire out wat we all know beforehand namely that if so be every farmer in Ireland gives up his farm, the only Tennant left will be the Lord Left-tenant.

" What a friteful state of Things! Propperty not safe nor life nayther for if your killd the murderer always gets an Irish allibi witch is being in two other Places at the time. No law — no justis — no nothing. And in such an age as ours for all sorts of larning. Looking from England at Ireland, who would believe he sees the Eighteenth sentry enlitened by Gas! But sumboddy's cum — Sergent Flanigan.

" O Jane, wat news for the poor Ile of Hearin! I ort to say hes a Sergent in the Cunstabulabulary Force and as sich knows everything — & he says there 's a breaking out at sum place that begins with Killin; its only a small Villige, but you know very bad erupshuns begins with little spots. I was too flurrid to ketch the particlers, but theres a reglar rebellion, & Lord nose how many thowsand Irish all harmed with sithes a-going to take the field. And theyre to take Dublin & to plow up the Fenix Park & repeal King Williams statute, & raise the Pigeon House down to the ground. In short he says the Police apprehends everything thats bad. Theres news and Thady not come yet! If he jines the disinfected I shall be misrable. I must go and look up Thady, so Adeu in haste,

" Your luving Sister,
" ELLINOR * * * *."

" P. S. Thady is just come in dredfully up in his spirrits, witch confirms the truth. He is as close as wax tho about it, & only says its a grate Day for Ireland, but theres rebelling in his very looks & the way he wistles & snaps his fingers, and walks up & down the room like Marchin & keeping step. Ile longs & means he does to jine in the skrimmage, & lord help him if he does wether he gets shot or slashed or took Prisonner for the Law never spares Inn Serjeants. If he does jine them I shall go mad. But wat am I to do for hes as willful &

hobstinate as an Irish Pig, witch wont be driv in the right road & witch makes their Pork so dangerus to eat its so apt to go the wrong way.

"P. S. S. More allarms! Sich drummins & fifing, and trumpiting, and prancing of horses, & rumblin of cannons, And Thady rubbing his hands & grinning & looking happy enuff to drive one delirius! O Jane, never marry into a civil warring Fammily! And wats wus, he wont listen to a janting Car to go off with tho we 're sitting as I may say on Barrils of Gunpowder & red hot Pokers!"

No. II.

From the same to the same.

"DEAR JANE,—

"This is to say I am safe & well. No thenks to the Rebeling for the very day after I rit my last it broke out. But Guvernment having had timely notis the Millitary was all Mustard, and very strong. And no dout would have committed dredful slorter of the pore miss guided cretures, if they had n't been misgided themselves by a traterus wretch as undertook to lead them the rite road. Insted of witch he led them clean contrary into a peacable common full of geese & asses so that nothin actionable took place xcept givin the guide a sound floggin. If the sogers had quartered him on the spot it would have served him rite, But thenk Provedins wat was ment for our ruin was our preservin! It seems wen the rebbels cum to Donny Brook they halted & drew up in order of Battel for a fite with the troops witch in course did not arive. You may gudge how that tride their Irish tempers & in partickler in such a famus spot for fiting and connected with Shillallyin Associations ever since the creation. So after waitin as long as they could & no signs of a skrimmage till their patience was wore out entirely with the disapintment, the Rebbels fell a fiting among themselves, the rite wing agin the left, & then both jining together attackt the center boddy & gave each other sich routs & got so dissipated that they quite defeated themselves, & so there 's an end of the Irish Rebellion. Praise goodness Thady was n't there, having a Job on a house top, and I took away the ladder.

"I am, dear Susan, your loving Sister,

"ELLINOR * * * *"

A LEADING ARTICLE.

THE CARNABY CORRESPONDENCE.

THERE is no estimate more ludicrous than that which is formed by unthinking persons of the powers of Authors. Thus, when a gentleman has once written a Book, say, on Domestic Medicine, it is popularly supposed that he is competent to compose a work on any subject whatever, from Transcendental Philosophy down to Five Minutes' Advice on the Teeth. Something of the kind is observable in the Autobiography of Brasbridge, the Silversmith, of Fleet Street, who tells us that after the publication of his Memoirs, he was

hailed by a fellow-citizen with, "So you have written a Book! — why, for the future I shall call you Shakespeare!" as if the recorder of a set of "fiddle-headed" anecdotes became, *ipso facto*, on a par with the creator of Othello. For another instance I can refer to my own humble experience. The anti-antiquarian nature of my literary researches is sufficiently well-known; yet it did not prevent a grave, retrospective-looking gentleman from one day concluding an account of some inedited architectural remains near Whitehall, with "I wonder now that *you*, as a writer, have never taken up the subject!" The worthy F. A. S. might as well have suggested a plot for a Farce to Sylvanus Urban; but such is the general opinion of the universality of a genius that prints. Bearing this tendency in mind, it will not seem so extraordinary that the following correspondence should be placed in the hands of the Editor of the Comic Annual by a respectable tradesman, who affirmed, with tears in his eyes, that "it was a grave subject, worthy of the serious consideration of the Public."

No. I.

To Mister Benjamin Carnaby, 7 Brigantine Row, Deptford, London. (*With Spead.*)

DEER BRUTHER, —

I am trully sory to arrow up yure relativ felings But it do seam to Me as my deer Bob is beeing shamfully Iltretid at his Skull. Inclosd is the pore fellars too letters the last jist cum to hand, And were sich a blo to fathurly felings I have nevver bean my hone Man evver sins. It appeer he hav wel ni bin Starvd. Prays God his pore Muther is coald under the Hearth, it wud spile the rest of hir hashes if so be she cood read his tail of pewtered meet. If she ad a delite hear abuv it were childrins legs strate And there Bellis well fild partickly groin up Yuths — and She wood av run creazy to think of the Constitushun bein rewind for evver and ever with turnd tabil Bear. And you too I no you will blead at Art for the mizriz of yure pore Nevy But I hop you will old up under it tho it be as it war a thunderboult on us boath. In respex of Larning it seam his mind hav bin neglectid to be nurrisht up as well as is bodely Fram even to cumoare the

Leters my Bob rite a site better gud Inglish nor his Master witch to my mind He mite hav dun grates at Home in loo of paing sich mints of Munny for Skulling But wat disapints me Most next to his fammishin is the Greck and Lattin as I did sit my Art upon to hav won clasicle Skollard bransh in the famely. Them too hushers desarves a wiping at a carts tale, and so do that mawks with hir luv gammux in juvenal presents Much gud it wur my sendin him abuv a duzzin mile off from Lunnun to uncorrup his morrils. Has for the Dockter

THERE 'S A DEFICIENCY ON THE QUARTER.

I cud find in my hart to strip his dipplomer over his years with my hone ands wen i think that in loo of techin the yung idear how to shut he has mayhap stunted the Pore boys groth for his lif to cum. But overpourin felings forebids my drawin moor picters of Bobs suffrin. I hav had no stummuck ever sins the Post nockt me down with the Nus. But it wood not be becummin a parent and a Farther to be revealing in lucksriz wile the Sun of his hone lines ware revealing in fliblod beaf and vargis. To be shure these is felings that you

as an unmarred man cant enter into a full lenth, but as hone Unkil by fleash and blud you will enter into the hard boord partickly as yure hone coarse of lif as had its scrimps and cum shorts and tort you wot it is to be pincht in yure Fud. Wi i mite as well hav sent him to a short communing Yorksheer Skull at twenty pound per anum a yeer and had his close chuckt in to his Bed and bord. In the interium I hav forewardid him a cumfitting letter with a Won Pun Not to treet himself to sumat moor stayin and suportin nor stal pastery, But I do hop and beg Deer Bruther to hav your sentimints on the cas as you be moor caperble to advize me then I am, and not to delay riting if so be yure officious dutis purvent pearsonally quiting the yard. I wud hav tuck a place on the Rumfud Stag and sit off at wons but Gowt forebid my cotching and so do Missis Rumsey for as yusial wen my felings is Frustratid all my Nervs is flone to my Fut. Pore Missis Rumsey simperthizes at evvery thing and is quit as upsit in her sperrits for as she say altho but Houskeper her Bowls yarns to Bob all as one with an hone hoffspring. She do say as Bobs a littel piggin brested and shoes simtoms of pullmary afection she trembil for fear pourness of blud sows seeds of sumthink fatle in his lunges. Indeed her mutherly hangsity offen remind a lass of her as lies volting in All allows barking. With witch I conclud with all brutherly luv, hopping to here by return of Poast. I no you seldim or nevver anser peples favers partickly mine but I do hop as this hear is a matter of vittle importins you devot a few minuets to

Yure luving but aflicted Bruther

JOHN CARNABY.

P. S. If so be you thort best to poshay off xpressivly to Bob, watever is disburstid out of pockit my Puss shall kiver the hole. Praps you may lick him to be tuck away at wons for it wud be a thowsend pitis to brake his sperrit and he is raythor tender artid as you may gudge by wat he rite of his pore late muther. Well, hevin nose I war never in faver of turning Cots but if so be they wood reform the Skulls I wood jine the Wigs.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

To John Carnaby Esquire. Number 49 Polyanthus Place, Mile End Road, London.

HONORED PARENT, —

As the sight of his native Terra Furma to the hardy Mariner on the pathless waste of the vast expanse of Ocean, so are the filial affections of a Son and School boy to inform we break up on Friday the 21st Instant; when I hope to find Yourself, comprising all my Relations and Friends, enjoying that greatest of Blessings, a state of salubrity.

When we add to this the pleasing Sensation of scholastic Duties fulfilled with Attention, Industry, and Diligence, accompanied by a preponderating Progress in all juvenile Studies, Objects, and Pursuits a sanguine expectation is indulged that the parental Sentiments of Satisfaction will be spontaneously conferred on the present half Year, participating however with a due regard to health, comfort, and morals. Indeed it would be precocious to anticipate otherwise by the unrelenting Vigilance and Inculcation evinced by our Guide, Philosopher, and Friend, Doctor Darby and Assistants, as likewise the more than maternal Solicitude betrayed by Mrs. Doctor D. who begs Leave to cordially unite with the Same in Respectful Compliments.

I am happy to say the improvement I have made in the Latin and Greek Tongues, including French and Italian, has been very great and such as I trust to deserve and obtain his Parent's, Master's, Friend's, and Wellwisher's warmest approbation and Esteem. And this Reflection will be enhanced to reflect, that by being impressed upon by pious, virtuous, and loyal Principles, every juvenile Member of the Establishment is a firm and uncompromising Supporter and Defender of King, Church, and State.

I will now conclude by giving my best Love to all Relations and Friends. and accept the Same from

Honored Parent,
Your Dutiful and Affectionate Son,
ROBERT CARNABY.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

From the same to the same.

DEAR FATHER, —

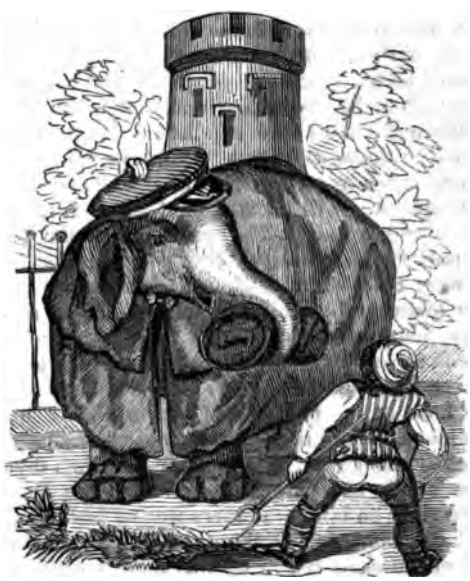
I hope you wont be angry at writing of my own Acord and if you like you may stop the postage out of what you mean to give me next time, but the other letter was all a flam and didnt speak my real mind. The Doctor frumpt it all up out of his own head, and we all copied it out for all our fathers. What I want to tell you is as the holidays are so nigh, I do wish you would make up your mind for me to be took away

DRAWING UP ARTICLES OF SEPARATION.

for good and all. I dont like the victuals for one thing, and besides I am allmost sure we are not well teached. The table beer always gives me the stomach ake if I dont tie a string

tight round it and I only wish you see some of Mr. Murphy's ruling when he smells so of rum. Another thing is the batter puddings which the fellows call it putty, because it sticks pains in our insides, and sometimes we have stinking beef. Tom Spooner has saved a bit on the sly to show parents, but it 's so strong we are afeard it wont keep over the three weeks to the holidays, and we are treated like galley slaves, and hare and hounds is forbid because last time the hare got up behind the Chelmsford Coach and went home to his friends in Leadenhall Market. As for sums we know the ciphering Master has got a Tutors Key because theres a board at the bottom of his desk comes out with a little coaxing, and more than that hes a cruel savage and makes love to Masters daughter, and shes often courted in the school room because its where her father dont come so much as anywheres else. The new Footman is another complaint. The Doctor dont allow him nothing a year for his wages except his profits out of the boys with fruit and pastery, and besides being rotten and stale hes riz burnt almonds twice since Micklemas. Then we are almost quite sure Monseur Le Smith dont know Italian at least we have always observed he never talks to the image boys, and the old Cook never favors no one now except Carter with sop in pans ever since his Mother come to see him. And thats why I do hope at my next school you will raise my pocket money, its unpossible to tip handsome out of sixpence a week. Jackson saved enough to buy a Donkey and then divided him into shares and I had a shilling share but the Doctor were so unjust as seize on him altho there was no law agin bringing asses to the school. It was the same on Guy Fox day with our squibs and rockets which we was more mortified to hear them going off after we were in bed. I am certain sure we should have had a barring out in our school room long and long ago only the Doctor hardly ever wants to come in. Thats the way the ushers do just as they like in school hours and Mr. Huckings does a leather sellers bookkeeping and Mr. Snitch makes poetry for the newspapers. Its not my fault then if I am backwards in my Greek and Latin though I have got a Prize for Spelling and Grammer but we all have prizes for something to please our parents when we go home. The only treat we have is reddishes out of the garden when they are got old and burning hot and popgunny and them

wont last long as masters going to keep pigs. I suppose then we shall have measely pork to match the stinking beef. The fellows say its because the Doctor swops Stokes's schooling agin butchers meat and as the edication is so very bad old Stokes on his part wont send in any better quality. Thats whats called mutual accommodation in the newspapers. Give my love to Mrs. Rumsey with thanks for the plum cake only



HE 'S A-GOIN' TO TAKE A TOWER.

next time more sweetmeat, and say I am almost sure I sometimes sleep in a damp bed. I am certain sure Mrs. Rumsey would advise you the same as I do, namely for me to be took away, without running more risks, if it was only for fear of Mac Kenzie, for hes a regular tyrant and hectors over us all. Hes three parts a nigger and you cant punch his head so as to do any good, and only last Monday he was horsed for wanting to googe little Jones's eyes out and for nothing at all but just looking at his towel to see if the black come off. I am ready

to take my drop down dead if it is not all faithfully true, Mac Kenzie and the beef and the Footman and all, and I do hope you will trust to my word and be agreeable to my offer to be took away and I do hope it will be before next Saturday for thats Mr. Paynes visiting day, the Drawing Master as I call him, but some of the fellows have nick named him Sinbad because he hunted the elephants so for their teeth. Philip Frank

THE OLD ORIGINAL RAILWAY.

says theres a capital school at Richmond where the Master permits fishing and boating and cigars and gunpowder and poney chaises for only sixty guineas a year. I often think if my poor dear late Mother was alive it is just the genteel sort of School she would like me to be finished off at. But thats as you prefer, and if you will only promise upon your honor to remove me I wont run away. I forgot to say I have very bad head akes sometimes besides the stomach akes and last week I was up in the nussery for being feverish and spotty,

and I had to take antimonious wine but nothing made me sick except the gruel. Precious stuff it is and tastes like slate pencil dust and salt. I was in great hopes it was scarlet fever or something catching that I might be sent home to you, but the fisician said my rash was only chickings or stinging nettles. Altogether I was so unhappy at not getting on in my learning that I do beg and pray to be took away, and I will be very dutiful and grateful all the rest of my days. Do, pray, do, and consider me down on my bended knees. And I will wish you every comfort in life if you will only provide for mine and I will pray for your gout to go away for ever and ever and then I will nurse your last days and be such a good son to you as never was except me. And in that case I owe three shillings to the footman and should n't like to leave the school in debt. I shall expect to see you come in all the coaches that go the road or at least that you will fetch me in a letter, and if I am disapointed I really do believe I shall go off my head or something. With which I remain

Dear Father,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

ROBERT CARNABY.

No. 2.

To Mister John Carnaby, Number 49 Polyanthus Place, Mile End, London.

DEAR BROTHER, —

This is to acknowledge the favor of your family letter with enclosures, which came to hand as pleasant and welcome as a 4-inch shell, that is no great treat of itself, and discharges a worse lot of botheration from its inside. Between both I got as Port Royal a headach as a man need desire from a bottle of new rum, for which, as it 's not unbrotherly to swear at a nevy, "dear Bob" and his school be d—d. As to my not answering letters, I *always* do, provided they 're either saucy or challenging; in which case, like answering a broadside, it 's a point of duty and honor to return as good as you get; — but for swopping sweet civil lollipop letters, lick for lick, it 's more than I would do with any female alive, let alone a man. And when yours are not lollipopping, they 're snivelling, or else

both together, as the case is now. However blood 's blood: and so for once I will commit what you want, rather than accept your invite, and go up to help you and that old dry red cow, Mother Rumsey, to chew the cud of the matter all over again by word of mouth. As for harrowing up my feelings, or ploughing them up either, thank my stars it 's a stiffer soil than that comes to. Why, my feelings are as tough — and not without need — as a bull-beef steak fresh killed, and take quite as much pitching into before they 're as tender as you suppose. Likely it is, that a man who has rammed his head, as I have in Africa, into a stuck camel for a secondhand swig at his cistern, would come within sixty degrees of the notion of pitying a lubberly schoolboy for having as much as ever he could swill of sour swipes! Then for bad food, the stinkingest beef I ever met with was none to be had, good or bad, except the smell of the empty barrel. That 's something like what you call being pincht in my fud; and so it was. I reckon when I gave my watch, and a good seven-shilling piece besides, for about a pound of pork cartridges. So I 'm not going to pipe my eye at dear Bob's short commons neither. It 's all very well for papboating mothers to admire fat babbies while they 're on the lap; but the whole human breed would be spoiled, if Mother Nature did not unspoil it again by sending us now and then to the School of Adversity, without a knife and fork and a spoon. I came in for a quarter's learning there myself, in the Desart as aforesaid, and one of the lessons I learnt was from the ostriches; namely, when you can't get a regular cargo of food, you must go in ballast with old shoes, leather caps, or any other odd matters you can pick up. There 's nothing in life like bringing chaps up hardy, if they 're to stand the hammering we 're all born to, provided we are born alive. I once heard a clever Yankee arguing to the same point. "Rear up your lads," says he, "like nails; and then they 'll not only go through the world, but you may clench 'em on t'other side." And for my part, if I was a father, which thank God I am not, to my knowledge, I would mark down a week of Banyan days to every month in the Almanac, just to accustom the youngsters to take in and let out their bread bags, till it came natural; like the Laps and Esquimaux, who spend their lives in a feast and a fast, turn and turn about, whereby their insides get as elastic as India rubber, and accommodate them-

selves to their loading, chock full or clean, as falls out. I 've known the time I would have given all my prize-money for a set of linings of the same conveniency, as when it was coming to the toss-up of a cowry whether I was to eat Tom Pike, or Tom Pike was to eat me. Just read the North Pole Voyages, and you will see that pampering bellies is not the exact course to make Captain Backs. So for all that 's been made on that tack, hitherto, you owe nothing but a higher rating to Doctor Darby provided there 's any step above Doctor in his service; I 'll even go so far as stand my share towards a bit of plate to him, for not making my nevy a loblolly milksop. That 's my notion about hard fare. To be sure there was Mother Brownrigg was hung for going a little too near the wind in her 'prentice's insides; but if the balance was squared, a few of the other old women would be run up to the yard-arm, for slow poisoning the rising generation with sugar-plum cakes and kickshaw tarts. And that your dear Bob has got a rare sweet tooth of his own is as plain as the Pike of Teneriffe, for it sticks out like a Barbary wild boar's tusks all through his precious complaints. Whereby you had better clap a stopper on in time, unless mayhap you want him to grow up in the fashion, which seems now-a-days for our young men to know, and think, and talk, ay and write too, about kitchen craft, — with their *pully olays* and *volley vongs*, — as if they was so many cook's mates at a French Hotel. There 's no disputing likings, but rather than be such a macaroni dishclout dandy, as delicate as a lap-dog, I 'd be a turnspit's whelp at once, and sit up on my hind legs a-begging for the sop in the pan. Now if you 're for his being one of those unable-bodied objects of creation, I 've no more to say; for you have got the right bearings, and have only to stand on till you bring dear Bob and Molly Coddle into one. But if so be on the contrary you have gumption enough to want to claw off that point, then down helm at once, and cut Mother Rumsey adrift, plum cakes and all. I 've long had on my mind to drop you a word of advice, against that old catamaran, who knows fast enough that two bears' heads are never so likely to rub together as when they 're a-licking the same cub. By the cub I mean my nevy, and the two old ones are you and Mother R. Besides it 's been my observation through life. Many 's the young man and woman will live for years together in the

same house, or make the India voyage together in the same ship, without hooking on, or even coming in sight of such a notion; but neither I, nor anybody else, ever saw two old ones, he and she, in the like case, without their coming at

LAYING DOWN THE LAW.

long and at last to a splice in church. So it is with an old cat and dog, that while they had a tooth in their heads could hardly abide in the same parish, whereas when they get on the superannuated list, you will see them as thick as thieves, and messing together in the same dish. The philosophy of it is more than I pretend to know, unless it be they 're past fighting, and fit for no active sort of work; — but so it is, as sure as the sea is salt. You had best then part company at once, if you don't want to see dear Bob mast-headed up to the back garret, or cooped down in the coal-cellar, on monkey's allowance; such being the first steps a stepmother always takes in any story-book ever read. I 'm for my nevy having

fair play after all. So as I 've subscribed to the bit of plate to Dr. Darby for case-hardening the fellow's carcase, you may set me down towards the spitefullest boatswain's cat that ever was handled, in case it turns out he has neglected the boy's mind. I 've seen a man seized up for a much smaller offence than crimping and inveigling a long hundred of lads at a time to a Sham Abram school, and swindling them out of the best part of the property about them, namely their juvenile time. It is only a streak above kidnapping, seeing that for any profit in learning the youngsters might as well spend their best years in the Plantations. Not but that Parents deserve a cobbing themselves for putting a boy under a master without asking to look at his certificates. As for the Latin and Greek, mayhap they 're no loss to take on about. The dead and gone tongues for a tradesman's son, that 's going behind a counter, is much of a muchness with fitting up a Newcastle collier's cabin after the pattern of a Leith smack's; only that the gilding and polishing may be grimed and grubbed off again in the course of trade. Still, considering they were paid for as work done, in common honesty my nevy ought to have had them put in his head; or at least something in lieu, such as Navigation or the like. His own mother tongue is quite a different matter; and thereupon I 'll give you my mind, upright and downright, of the two School-letters. To be sure the Doctor likes weight of metal, and fires away with the high-soundingest words he can get, whereby his meaning is apt to loom bigger than it is, like a fishing-boat in a fog; and where there 's such a ground swell of language, a seaman is apt to think there 's no great depth of ideas; but bating that, there 's nothing to shake a rope's end at, but quite the reverse, especially as to teaching the youngsters to give three cheers for their king and country. Now, Dear Bob's letter-work on the other hand, with its complaints of hard fare, is only fit to be sung by a snivelling Swiss beggar boy to his hurdy gurdy; besides many a chafe in the grammar and orthography, and being writ in such a scrambling up and down fist as a drunken purser might scrawl in a gale of wind. Now it 's my opinion a landsman that has n't his hands made as hard as horn with hauling home sheets nor his fingers as stiff and sticky as pitch can make 'em, has it in his power to write as fine penmanship as copperplate except for the want of good will. So that the fault may be

set down to my nevy's own account, and mayhap many of the rest, for no doubt there are skulkers at school as well as on board ship. My advice then is this, namely, just throw a shot across Dr. Darby's forefoot, to let him know you mean to overhaul him, and demand a sight of the school log, and so forth; by which you will have satisfaction one way or another; and putting the case he has gone to leeward of his duty, why, then come hammer and tongs, and blaze away at him to your heart's content. The next step in course will be to take my nevy from under his orders, and find him a berth in a well officered ship; and I am ready so far to do an uncle's part by the lad, as help to look out for a proper well appointed craft. That 's my advice whether you steer by it or not, — and so no more at present, and not sorry to belay — from

Dear John, Your loving Brother,
BEN CARNABY.

No. 3.

To Mr. Benjamin Carnaby, Brigantine Row, Deptford, London.

DEER BRUTHER, —

This is to acnolidge the faver of your verry hash letter as I am compIld to call it, both as regard deer Bob and that verry wurthy sole, pore Mrs. Rumsey. I am sory to find you can bare a grug so long, for I am shure she is too obleegin and civil spokin to hav disagred to your smokin in the parler if so be she had none you maid it sich a pint. As for her inwigglin me into becummin a step farther to my one child watever old brut bares and cats and dogs may do, I hop my Virtu will purtect me from infiddlety to a former ti. As for pore Bob, he hav no more sweat tuth then all boys is born with, and if he do rite with a bad hand, i nevver cud rite any grate shacks miself on an emti stummach. But that 's what you can't or wont inter into, no moor than I can inter into cammil's insids or hostridges eating their old shues and lether caps. In regard to yure advis thanking you all the sam, but meen to foller my hone, not but wat it ware nateral for you to recumend acording to yure one line of lif, to wom fiting and dueling is sekondand nater. As such hammer and tonges

and blazin away pistles wood be quit in yure spear, but as for my wantin satisfuxion of Doctor Darby, and shuting his fore feet, or his hind feet ether, or inded any wares els, is moor then I coud promis tho no dout ment kindly, but I am nun of

BUTT AND BEN.

yure wingin amers. Besids being agin the Bibil and Gospil and only fit for gentilmen born. Still I tak as frendly ment, as well as yure offir to git yure nevy a siteation on bord ship witch wood be a shure way to hurry my dissent to the Tom. The see always was a haw to my mind, and if it litind or a grate hevvy gal came, I shud transpire with frite; or be thinkin on fogie nites of the ship lossing her way and gittin out of her depth. Howsumever I feal grateful for the horible idear, tho I cant xcept, and in meen time have rit to Dr. D. to remonsterit and ask him to say candiddle wether he hav starvd deer Bob and ruind his mind or no. I faver with a coppy of

mine and will foreward hisn wen it cum, and as my gowt is mendin, mayhap I may go down to rumfud sum of thes days, and luck into everythink with my one ize.

I am Deer Benjamin
Yure luving Bruther,
JOHN CARNABY.

(COPY.)

To Dr. Darby Socratis Hous School Establismint, Rumfud Essex.

DOCTER DARBY SUR, —

If so be a farther and a Parrint may tak so grate a libberty, its my wish to rite about my Sun. Not bein a skollard, oing to neglected genus in yuth, I am uncompitent to be a Gudge and war indust to sho the skull letter to my Bruther Benjamin, of the late Rial Navy who had moor buck larning for his Sheers, besids seein forrin parts and he do say wot give grate concern to All as is concarned, namely my Suns edication is fur from a thurro nollige of evvery thing, and partickly his hostifografy or summat to that effect. As such is hily blamms bil to yureself or tooters whos provins war to propergit wot they had in their hone heds into them under them, insted of witch his unkel say he hav bin teecht moor ignorans then anny think else. Witch is verry ard considring mints of munny lad out, and hevin nose I have not bin sparring with him, but pade away at a grate rat, ever sins he war britchd. Hunderds cant kiver him from fust to last And nothin but blited hops arter all. Cirkimstancis purvented my having moor nor one acomplishment and that war my farthers bisness, but tho brort up hill miself I no the Valley of edicashun. Warefor if it be no offens I wish to no candiddle from your hone Mouth wether you hav so unedicatted him as his Unkil suspex. At sam tim will esteam a faver to no if he continny in gud helth witch ware always a littel dellicat and pecking, but I trust as how Rumfud hare and gud beaf and muttin and holesum wit bred and milk hav made him quit fat. His pore late muther lickwise made a pint of gud unturnd tabel bear, as all assiduities is injurus to yuth. As she used to say, pore sole, fud and flanning saves fisick. All-

so I hop and trust you disalow the boys of advanst years tirenizing over the weekly wons, or savedge tooters as is apt to sho lickings and dislickings. The tooters morrils in coarse is a car not overluckd, but sweetharting demand constant vigilings to gard agin its cumming in clandestiny where it ort not. Mrs. Rumsey also begs to apollogiz for naming damp beds, but in coarse Misses Doctor Darby have a muther's felings about damp lining for boys boddis. All witch will give grate sattisfaxun to here, as in case of the revers parrintel duty will feal hobbligatted to remov afore the mischief go to fur. I shall luck eggerly for your anser and trust you will embrace all the queerys. I ashore it will giv grate pleshure not to hav to remove my custom, with witch and respective compliments,

I remane Dr. Darby Sur
Your verry humbe! Servant
JOHN CARNABY.

No. 4.

To Mister Benjamin Carnaby, Brigantine Row, Deptford.

DEER BENJAMIN, —

Inclosd is Dr. Darbys explainative Not, witch for anny thing I no to the contrairy is evvry thing as we cud luck for, without going into the retales. He apear to hav no douts of a misscomprehenshun on our parts, witch prove us to be boath in the rong as will be a grate comfit to you and deer Benjamin

Yure luving Bruther
JOHN CARNABY.

(THE ENCLOSURE.)

To John Carnaby, Esquire.

DEAR SIR, —

In ancient Greece and Rome, so celebrated for their classical Attainments, it would have been considered derogatory to the Academical Dignity, for Scholastic Discipline to be subject to Animadversion from a Civic Character, professedly unconversant with Polite Literature in all its Branches. As the

Principal of a Pedagogical Establishment, I might, therefore, objurgate with Propriety any irrevelent Discussion to be deprecated from such a superfluous source. Conscious, however, of standing on the Basis of an undeniable Prospectus, which professes to embrace Universal Knowledge, throughout the Circle of the Arts and Sciences, I am prepared to assert that

"THERE'S A RIGHT WAY AND A WRONG FOR EVERYTHING."

a more Comprehensive System of Education could not be devised than that which is ascribed to the Establishment at Socrates House. If further Testimonials were necessary, I might triumphantly appeal to the Mental Cultivation of flourishing Members of Society, evinced in the successful Pursuit of Affluence, in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, so advantageous to the Commerce, Wealth, and Power of the United Kingdom. Such Testimonies, it is presumed, are suf-

ficiently obvious to the most Unprejudiced Mind, to demand those unerring Principles of fostering Talent, inviting Emulation, and stimulating Enquiry, combined with Moral Intellectual and Dietetical qualities, such as to command the unreserved Approbation and Confidence of all parties engaged in the important Task of Juvenile Tuition. Trusting that

"BLESS ME, HOW BALD YOU ARE!"
"YES — I WAS PLUCKED AT COLLEGE."

the Prolixity of this explanatory Statement will propitiate the most Paternal Solicitude, with sentiments in accordance with the rapid Progress of Human Civilization, permit me to subscribe myself, with every feeling of respect,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient faithful humble servant,

SIMON DARBY. LL. D.

No. 5.

To Mr. John Carnaby, 49 Polyanthus Place, Mile End Road, London.

DEAR BROTHER, —

If I was to write what comes uppermost, I should stand a chance of a place I won't name. But you always was a you-know-what, and as the proverb says, there 's never a one like you now you are old. As for the school, it 's the nest of a land pirate ; and for any good to his mind, dear Bob might as well be in the Hulks. However it won't do to let you go and make a so-and-so of yourself all over the country — whereby, luckily for you, there 's an old shipmate of mine laid up at Rumford, and so I can kill him and my Nevy with the same stone. So let Mister doctor Darby look out for squalls, and that's all from

Your loving Brother,

BEN CARNABY.

No. 6.

(*From the same to the same.*)

DEAR BROTHER, —

This is to say I made this place, namely Rumford, yesterday morning about 10 A. M., and immediately bore away to Socrates House, and asked for my nevy, — but you shall have it logged down all fair and square.

Well, after a haul at the bell and so forth, I was piloted into a room, on the ground tier, by the footman, and a pastry-faced son of a land cook he looked sure enough. Where, as soon as may be, Mrs. Doctor Darby joins company, a tight little body enough, all bobbing up and down with curtseys like the buoy at the Nore, and as oily tongued as any rat in the Greenland Docks. By her own account, she rated a step above Mother to six score of boys, big and little, and every man jack of them more made of, and set store by, than if they had been parts of her own live stock. All which flummery would go down with you, and the marines, mayhap, but not with old sailors like me. As for dear Bob, she buttered

him of both sides, thick and threefold, as the best, sweetest, darlingest, and what not young gentleman of the whole kit, besides finding out a family likeness between him and his uncle, which if it's any feature at all, is all my eye. Next she enquired after you, the worthiest parent she ever knew,

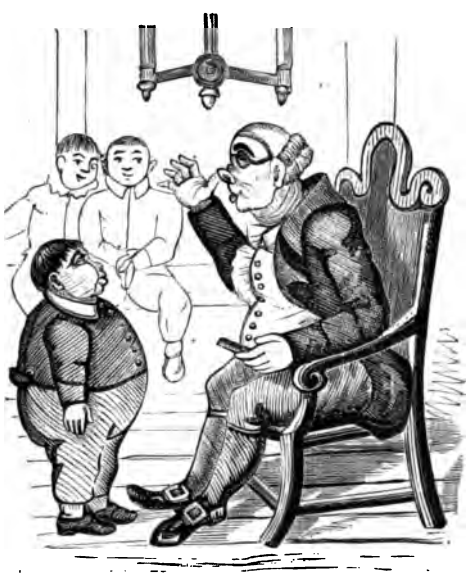
"IN FOR A PENNY — IN FOR A POUND."

not excepting her own father, whereby I blest my stars you were not within hail; or you would have been flabbergasted in no time, with your eyes running like scuppers, and your common senses on their beam ends. At long and last in comes my Nevy himself, as smooth and shining as a new copper; whereby says she, "I hope you will excuse untidiness, and so forth, because of sending for him just as he stood." That's how he came no doubt in his Sunday's breeches; besides twigging the wet soap-suds in his ears. "Here my sweet love," she sings out, "here's your dear kind uncle so

good as to come to enquire after your welfare." So dear Bob heaves ahead, and gets a kiss, not from me tho, and a liquorish lozenge for what she called his nasty hack. Nothing however but a cholic with parched peas, as he owned to afterwards. "Now, then, Nevy," says I, "what cheer — how do you like your berth?" when up jumps madam like a scalded cat; and no or yes, I must drink the favor of a glass of Sherry. Rank Cape, John, as ever was shipped. Then Master Robert, bless him, must have a leetle glass too, but provided I approve, and a ration of sweet cake. Whereby says she, "Now I will leave you to your mutual confidences" — as looked all fair and above board enough, if I had not made out a foot near the door. And in the twinkling of a handspike in sails Dr. Darby himself, with as many scrapes to me as if I was Port Admiral; and as anxious about my old gout — for I've got an easy shoe for a bunion — as if he'd been intimate with it in my great-grandfather's time. Well we palavered a bit about the French news, and the weather, and the crops, whatever you like let alone book learning; but that was not my course, and impatient to see Tom Pike, besides, so I ran slap aboard him at once with an ask to see the school. As I looked for, he was took all aback; however Madam was n't thrown so dead in the wind, but jumped up to the bell tackle, and after a bit of a whisper with the servant, we got under way for the school; but contrived to land somehow in the kitchen, with a long row of quatern loaves drawn up on a dresser to receive us, like a file of marines. Then Madam begins to spin a long yarn about plain food, but plenty of it, for growing youths — dear Bob's very lathy, John, for all that, — and then comes the Doctor's turn to open with a preachment on animal foods, and what will digest, and what won't; tho' for my own part, I never met with any meat but would do it in time, more or less. So by way of clapping a stopper I made bold to remind that time is short tho life is long, and thereby luffing slap up to my Nevy, "Bob," says I, "what's the variation of the compass?" So Master Bob turns it about abit, and then says he, "Why, it's one leg shorter than t'other." Which is about as nigh it, Brother, as you are to Table Bay! Any how it gave the Doctor a bad fit of coughing, which his wife caught of him as natural as if it had been the hooping sort — at last says she, "Maybe Master

Robert has not progressed yet into navigation." "Maybe not, ma'am," says I, "and so we'll try on another tack — Nevy, what's metaphysics?" "Brimstone and Treacle," says Bob, as ready as gunpowder, and the lady looked as satisfied as Bob did — but the Doctor had another bad fit, and good reason why, for there's no more physic in metaphysics than a baby might take in its pap. By this time we were going up stairs, but lay to awhile alongside a garden pump on the landing, to have a yarn about dowsing glims, and fire guards, and going the rounds at night; and as dear Bob hung astarn, I yawed, and let fly at him again with "What's religion?" "The colic on Sundays," says he, as smart as you like; tho' what he meant by colic the Old Gentleman knows. However both the Doctor and madam pulled a pleasant face at him, and looked as pleased as if he had found out the longitude; but that was too fine weather to last, for thinks I, in course he can carry on a little further on that board, so says I, "Bob, what's the main-top-gallant rule of Christianity?" "Six weeks at Christmas," says he, as bold as brass from getting encouraged before. So you see, John, he don't know his own persuasion. In course we were all at wry faces again; but the Doctor had the gumption to shove his out of a window, and sing out an order to nobody in the back yard. As for Madam, she shot ahead into the sleeping rooms, where I saw half a hundred of white dimity cots, two warming-pans, and nine clothes baskets — Master Robert's berth among the rest. Next we bore away by a long passage to the kitchen again, where two rounds of boiled beef had been put to officer the quartern loaves, and so through the washery and pot-and-pannery into the garden ground, where I came in for as long a yarn about the wholesomeness of fresh vegetables and salads, as if the whole crew of youngsters had been on the books with the scurvy. From the cabbages we got to the flower-beds; and says the Doctor, "I don't circumscribe, or circumvent, one or t'other; I don't circumvent my pupils to scholastical works, but encourage perusing the book of Nature." — "That's very correct, then, Doctor," said I, "and my own sentiment exactly. Nevy, what's Natural Philosophy?" — "Keeping rabbits," says Bob; which sounds likely enough, but it's not the thing by sixty degrees. I can't say but I felt the cats'-paws coming over my temper; but I kept it under

till we fetched the paddock, to look at the cows; and that brought up another yarn about milk-dieting; and says Madam, "when summer comes, our Doctor is so good as to permit the young gentlemen to make his hay." — "No doubt alive, ma'am," says I; "saves hands, and good fun too, eh nevy? — What 's Agriculture?" However this time dear Bob chose to play sulky, and would n't answer good or bad; whereby the Doctor crowds up with a fresh question. "Now then, Master



CRAMMED FOR AN EXAMINATION.

Robert," says he pretty sharp, "I will ask you something you *do* know. What is Algebra, — Al—gebra?" — "Please, sir," says Bob, "its a wild donkey all over stripes." — "There 's a dear boy!" cries madam, the more fool she; but old Darby looked as black as thunder at midnight. "I 'm afraid," says he, letting go the top-lifts, as one may say, of his eyebrows; "I 'm afraid there has been a little slackness here with the cat; but, by your leave, sir, and so forth, I will investigate a

little into it myself. Now Master Robert take a pull at your mental tackle, for I 'm going to overhaul your Mathematics: — How do you describe a triangle?" — "Please, sir," says Bob, "it 's the thing that tingle-tangles to the big drum." Well, there was the devil to pay again, and no pitch hot! Old Darby looked as if he meant either to drop down dead on the spot of apoplexy, or to murder dear Bob; he swelled and reddened up so about the wattles without hoisting out a word. For my own part, nevy as he was, I could n't help serving him out a back-handed slap of the head, and then I turned to at the schoolmaster. "So, Mister Doctor," says I, "this is what you call a liberal education in your manifest?" — "Sir," says he, looking as stiff as a corporal just made, "whatever your, some cursed long hard word may be, I cannot consider myself liable for the lagging astern of, I must say, the dullest sailor in my whole convoy." — "Why, blood and thunder!" said I, for old Nick could not have helped it — "you told me that Bob, my nevy there, was the handiest and smartest of the whole kit!" — "That was *me*, sir," says the lady, hauling in between us — "and then I only spoke as to temper, as Greek and Latin are beyond a female's provinces" — which was true enough; so I felt bound to beg her pardon, which was granted; and we had smooth water again till we neared the school-room. Now then, thought I, look out for squalls, for my mind was made up to stand no nonsense from the petty officers, that 's to say, gentlemen ushers. So I ranged up along-side the most mathematical-looking one I could pick out, by way of having a bout with him at trigonometry; but he chose to be as shy, and deaf and dumb, as a Gibraltar monkey just grabbed. "With submission, my good sir," says the Doctor, putting in his oar, "Mr. Huckin may consider it a work of supererror-something, and a going beyond ourselves, to re-examine him after the very satisfactory certificates that satisfied *me* myself." — "That 's to say," says I, "in plain English, that I 'm to get nothing but what I can screw out of my nevy?" — "My dear sir," says the Doctor, "you misconstruct me entirely — the whole of the juvenile pupils are open to candid scrutiny. Suppose we begin with the classics. Master Bush, sir, you will English me *hic, hac, hoc*." — "This, that, and t'other," says Master Bush; no great shakes of an answer, I guess, but it seemed to serve for a come-off.

Then came my turn, so I asked who was the discoverer of America? and may I never break biscuit again, if he did n't say "Yankee Doodle!" Well, to cut off the end of a long yarn, this was as good as there was to be got out of the best of them. · One told me that Guy Fox found out gunpowder; and another that a solar eclipse was along of the sun's standing in its own light. What else I might have learned, that I never knew before, must be left over for a guess; for in the middle of the next ask, it was all hats aloft! and three cheers for a half holiday; but if I had any hand in begging it, may I die ashore in a dry ditch! However that was too much of a dog's trick to be took quietly, so I prepared a broadside, with a volley of oaths to it, by way of small arms; but before I could well bring it to bear, the Doctor hauls out his watch, and says he, "it 's extremely bad luck, but there 's a voting this morning for a parish beadle, and I make a point not to let my private duties get to windward of my public ones." So say-

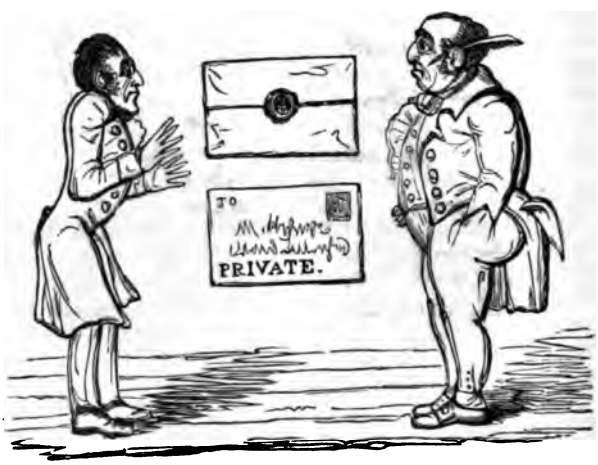
RECRIMINATION.

ing with a half-and-half sort of a bow, to me, he cut and run; madam getting athwart hawse so as to cover his getting off. In course it was no use to waste speech upon her; but I made bold to d—n the whole covey of under-masters, in the lump, as a set of the sharkingest, logger-headed, flute-playing, skulk-

ing, lubberly sons of grinning weavers and tailors that ever broke bread. So the finish over all is, that I took my nevy away, traps and all; and not an hour too soon; and with Bob in tow I made Tom Pike's, who was as glad to see his old messmate as I was to see him; and what 's more, when he heard the bit of a brush I had enjoyed, he informed me that Doctor Darby, LL. D., and what not, was all one and the same with Darby the ship-chandler, that went to pieces down at Wapping. You see then, as the chaplain says, that all 's for the best either here or hereafter; and so no more till Monday, when I shall bring my nevy Bob to you, to make what you will of him, which I hope will be as like a man as possible. If otherwise, I won't promise not to change my name by act of parliament, and so be no relation to dear Bob, nor to you neither; and that 's the real mind of

Your loving Brother,

BEN CARNABY.



BETWEEN YOU AND ME AND THE POST.

RIGHT AND WRONG.

A SKETCH AT SEA.

The Rights of Man, — whether abstract or real, divine or vulgar, vested or contested, civil or uncivil, common or uncommon — have been so fully and so frequently discussed, that one would suppose there was nothing new to be felt or expressed on the subject. I was agreeably surprised, therefore, during a late passage from Ireland, to hear the rights of an individual asserted in so very novel a manner as to seem worthy of record. The injured party was an involuntary fellow-passenger; and the first glance at him, as he leisurely ascended the cabin-stairs, bespoke him an original. His face, figure, dress, gait, and gestures, were all more or less eccentric; yet without any apparent affectation of singularity. His manner was perfectly earnest and business-like, though quaint. On reaching the deck, his first movement was towards the gangway, but a moment sufficed to acquaint him with the state of the case. The letter-bags having been detained an hour beyond the usual time of departure, the steam had been put on at a gallop, and Her Majesty's mail packet, the Guebre, had already accomplished some hundred fathoms of her course. This untoward event, however, seemed rather to surprise than annoy our Original, who quietly stepped up to the Captain, with the air of demanding what was merely a matter of course: —

"Hollo, Skipper! Off she goes, eh? But you must turn about, my boy, and let me get out."

"Let you get out!" echoed the Skipper, and again repeating it, with what the musicians call a staccato — "Let—you —get—out!"

"Exactly so. I'm going ashore."

"I'm rather afraid you are *not*, Sir," said the Skipper, looking decidedly serious, "unless you allude to the other side!"

"The other side!" exclaimed the Oddity, involuntarily turning towards England. "Poo! poo! nonsense, man, — I only came to look at your accommodations. I'm not going across with you — I'm not, upon my word!"

"I must beg your pardon, sir," said the Captain, quite solemnly. "But it is my firm opinion that you *are* 'going across.'"

"Poo, poo! all gammon. — I tell you I am going back to Dublin."

AN AQUATIC TRIP.

"Upon my soul, then," said the Skipper, rather briskly, "you must swim back like a grampus, or borrow a pair of wings from the gulls." The man at the helm grinned his broadest at what he thought a good joke of his officer's —

while the Original turned sharply round, parodied a hyena's laugh at the fellow, and then returned to the charge.

"Come, come, Skipper — it 's quite as far out as I care for — if you want to treat me to a sail!"

"Treat you to a sail!" roared the indignant officer. "Zounds! Sir, I 'm in earnest — as much in earnest as ever I was in my life."

"So much the better," answered the Original. "*I'm* not joking myself, and I have no right to be joked upon."

"Joke or no joke," said the Captain — "all I know is this. The mail-bags are on board — and it 's more than my post is worth to put back."

"Eh? What? How?" exclaimed the Oddity, with a sort of nervous dance. "You astonish me! Do—you—really —mean to say — I 'm obligated to go — whether I 've a right or not?"

"I do indeed, Sir — I 'm sorry for it, but it can't be helped. My orders are positive. The moment the mail is on board I must cast off."

"Indeed! — well — but you know — why, that 's *your* duty, not *mine*. *I* have no right to be cast off! I 've no right to be here at all. I 've no right to be anywhere — except in Merrion Square!"

The Captain was bothered. He shrugged up his shoulders, then gave a low whistle, then plunged his hands in his pockets — then gave a loud order to somebody, to do something, somewhere or other; and then began to walk short turns on the deck. His captive, in the mean time, made hasty strides towards the stern, as if intending to leap overboard; but he suddenly stopped short, and took a bewildered look at the receding coast. The original wrong was visibly increasing in length, breadth, and depth, every minute; and he again confronted the Captain.

"Well, Skipper — you 've thought better of it — I 've no right in the world, have I? — You will turn her round?"

"Totally impossible, Sir — quite out of my power."

"Very well, very well, very well indeed!" the Original's temper was getting up as well as the sea. "But mind, Sir — I protest. I protest against *you*, Sir — and against the ship — and the ocean, Sir — and everything! I 'm getting farther and farther out — but, remember, I 've no *right!* You

will take the consequences. I have no right to be kidnapped — ask the Crown lawyers, if you think fit!"

After this denouncement, the speaker began to pace up and down like the Captain, but at the opposite side of the deck. He was on the boil, however, as well as the engine, — and every time that he passed near the man whom he considered as his Sir Hudson Lowe, he gave vent to the inward feeling in a jerk of the head, accompanied by a short pig-like grunt. Now and then it broke out in words, but always the same four monosyllables, "This—is—too—bad" — with a most emphatic fall of the foot to each. At last it occurred to a stout, pompous-looking personage to interpose as a mediator. He began by dilating on the immense commercial importance of a punctual delivery of letters — thence he insisted on the heavy responsibility of the Captain; with a promise of an early return packet from Holyhead — and he was entering into a congratulation on the fineness of the weather, when the Original thought it was time to cut him short.

"My good sir — you'll excuse me. The case is nobody's but my own. *You* are a regular passenger. You have a right to be in this packet. You have a right to go to Holyhead — or to Liverpool — or to Gibraltar, — or to the world's end — *if—you—like*. But *I* choose to be in Dublin. What right have I to be here then? Not—one—atom! I've no right to be in this vessel — and the Captain there knows it. I've no right (stamping) to be on this deck! I have no more right to be tossing at sea (waving his arms up and down) than the Pigeon House!"

"It is a very unpleasant situation, I allow, Sir," said the Captain to the stout Passenger. "But, as I have told the gentleman, my hands are tied. I can do nothing — though nobody is more sorry for his inconvenience."

"Inconvenience be hanged!" exclaimed the Oddity, in a passion at last. "It is NO inconvenience, Sir! Not—the —smallest. But that makes no difference as to my being here. It's that — and that alone, — I dispute all right to!"

"Well, but my dear, good Sir," expostulated the pompous man; "admitting the justice of your premises, the hardship is confessedly without remedy."

"To be sure it is," said the Captain, "every inch of it. "All I can say is, that the gentleman's passage shall be no expense to him!"

"Thankee — of *course* not," said the Original with a sneer. "I've no right to put my hand in my pocket! Not that I mind expense. But it's my right I stand up for, and I defy you both to prove that I have any right — or any shadow of a right — to be in your company! I'll tell you what, Skipper" — but before he could finish the sentence, he turned suddenly pale, made a most grotesque wry face, and rushed forward to the bow of the vessel. The Captain exchanged a

SEA RIDDLE. "DO YOU GIVE IT UP?"

significant smile with the stout gentleman; but before they had quite spoken their minds of the absent character, he came scrambling back to the binnacle, upon which he rested with both hands, while he thrust his working visage within a foot of the skipper's face.

"There, Skipper! — now Mr. What d'ye call! — What do you both say to *that*? What right have I to be sick, — as

sick as a dog? I 've no right to be squeamish! I'm not a passenger. I 've no right to go tumbling over ropes and pails and what not — to the ship's head!"

"But my good Sir," — began the pompous man.

"Don't Sir me, Sir! *You* took your own passage. You have a *right* to be sick — You 've a right to go to the side every five minutes — you 've a right to DIE of it! But it 's the reverse with me — I have no right of the sort!"

"O certainly not, Sir," said the pomposity, offended in his turn. "You are indubitably the best judge of your own privileges. I only beg to be allowed to remark, that where I felt

"CHARMING SPOTS ABOUT THIS PART OF THE RIVER!"

I had so little right, I should hesitate to intrude myself." So saying, he bowed very formally, and commenced his retreat to the cabin, while the Skipper pretended to examine the compass very minutely. In fact our Original had met with a

choke-pear. The fat man's answer was too much for him, being framed on a principle clean contrary to his own peculiar system of logic. The more he tried to unravel its meaning, the more it got entangled. He did n't like it, without knowing why; and he quite disagreed with it, though ignorant of its purport. He looked up at the funnel, — and at the flag, — and at the deck, — and down the companion-stairs, — and then he wound up all by a long shake of his head, as mysterious as Lord Burghleigh's, at the astonished man at the wheel. His mind seemed made up. He buttoned his coat up to the very chin, as if to secure himself to himself, and never opened his lips again till the vessel touched the quay at Holyhead. The Captain then attempted a final apology, but it was interrupted in the middle: —

"Enough said, Sir, — quite enough. If you 've *only* done your duty, you 've no right to beg pardon — and I 've no right to ask it. All I mean to say is, here am I in Holyhead instead of Dublin. I don't care what that fat fellow says — who don't understand his own rights. I stick to all I said before. I have no right to be up in the Moon, have I? Of course not — and I 've no more right to stand on this present quay, than I have to be up in the Moon!"

"WHAT RIGHT HAVE YOU IN MY STEEL TRAP?"

THE GREAT CONFLAGRATION.

DREADFUL FIRE. — DESTRUCTION OF BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT. — THE SPEAKER'S HOUSE GUTTED. — REPORTS OF INCENDIARISM.

IT is our unexpected lot to announce that the Houses of Lords and Commons, so often threatened with combustion, are in a state of actual ignition. At this moment, both fabrics are furiously burning. We are writing this paragraph without the aid of lamp or candles; by the mere reflection of the flames. Nothing is known of the origin of the fire, although it is throwing a light upon everything else. — *Evening Star.*

The devouring element which destroyed Covent Garden and Drury Lane, the Royalty and the Pantheon, has made its appearance on a new stage, equally devoted to declamatory elocution. St. Stephen's Chapel is in flames! The floor which was trodden by the eloquent legs of a Fox, a Burke, a Pitt, and a Sheridan is reduced to a heap of ashes; and the benches which sustained the Demosthenic weight of a Wyndham, a Whitbread, and a Wilberforce are a mere mass of charcoal. The very roof that re-echoed the classicalities of Canning is nodding to its fall. In Parliamentary language, Fire is in possession of the House: the Destructive spirit is on its legs, and the Conservative principle can offer but a feeble opposition. — *Daily Post.*

The blow is struck. What we have long foreseen has come to pass. Incendiarism triumphs! The whole British Empire, as represented by the three estates, is in a blaze! The Throne, the Lords, and the Commons are now burning. The cycle is complete. The spirit of Guy Fawkes revives in 1834!

England seems to have changed places with Italy; London with Naples. We stand hourly on the brink of a crater;

every step we take is on a solfaterra — not a land of Sol Fa, as some musical people would translate it; but a frail crust, with a treacherous subsoil of ardent brimstone! At length the eyes of our rulers are opened; but, we must ask, could nothing short of such an eruption awaken them to a sense of the perilous state of the country? For weeks, nay, months past, at the risk of being considered alarmists, we have called the attention of the legislature and magistracy to a variety of suspicious symptoms and signs of the times, and in particular to the multiplied chemical inventions, for the purpose of obtaining instantaneous lights. Well are certain matches or fire-boxes called Lucifers, for they may be applied to the most diabolical purposes! The origin of the fire cannot raise the shadow of a doubt in any reasonable mind. Accident is out of the question. Tell us not of tallies. We have just tried our milk-woman's, and it contained so much water, that nothing could make it ignite. — *Britannic Guardian.*

The Houses of Parliament are in flames. We shall stop the press to give full particulars. Our reporters are at the spot, and Mons. C——, the celebrated Salamander, is engaged to give a description of the blazing *interiors*, exclusively for this journal. — *Daily Times.*

From a Correspondent.

On Thursday evening, towards seven o'clock, I was struck by the singular appearance of the moon silvering the opposite chimneys with a blood-red light, a lunar phenomenon which I conceived belonged only to our theatres. It speedily occurred to me that there must be a conflagration in my vicinity, and after a little hunting by scent as well as sight, I found myself in front of the Houses of Lords and Commons, which were burning with a rapidity and brilliancy that I make bold to say did not always characterize their proceedings. By favor of my natural assurance, which seemed to identify me with the firemen, I was allowed to pass through the lines of guards and policemen, who surrounded the blazing pile, and was thus enabled to select a favorable position for overlooking the whole scene. It was an imposing sight. The flames rose from the Peers' in a volume as red as the Extraordinary Red Book, and the House of Commons was not at all behindhand in vot-

ing supplies of timber and other combustibles. Westminster Hall reminded me vividly of a London cry, "Hall hot! Hall hot!" that was familiar in our childhood — and the Gothic architecture of the Abbey seemed unusually *florid*. Instead of dingy stone, the venerable pile appeared to be built of the well-baked brick of the Elizabethan age. Indeed, so red-hot

PLAYING AT HAZARD.

was its aspect, that it led to a ludicrous misapprehension on the part of the populace. A procession, bearing several male and female figures in a state of insensibility, naturally gave rise to the most painful conjectures, inferring loss of human life by the devouring element, but I have reason to believe it was only the Dean and Chapter saving the Wax-Work. As far as my own observation went, the first object carried out certainly bore a strong resemblance to General Monk.

In the mean time a select party had effected an entrance

into the Hall, but not without some serious delay, occasioned, I believe, by somebody within bringing the wrong key, that belonged to a tea-caddy. However, at last they entered, and I followed their example. The first person I beheld was the veteran Higginbottom, so unfairly, but facetiously put to death by the authors of the Rejected Addresses; for no man is more alive to his duty. But he was sadly hampered. First came one Hon. Gent. said to be Mr. Morrison, and insisted on directing the *Hose* department; and next arrived a noble Lord from Crockford's, who would n't sit out, but persisted in taking a hand, and playing, though everybody agreed that he played too high. I mention this, because some of the journals have imputed mismanagement to the engines, and have insinuated that the pipes wanted organizing; indeed, I myself overheard a noble director of the Academy of Music lamenting that the firemen did not "play in concert."

The same remark applies with greater force to the House of Commons. Here all was confusion worse confounded, and Higginbottom's station was enviable, compared with that of some of the poor fellows in St. Stephen's Chapel. A considerable number of members had arrived, and without any attention to their usual parliamentary rules, were all making motions at once, which nobody seconded. The most prominent, I was informed, were Mr. Hume, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Attwood, Mr. Buckingham, Mr. Pease, Sir Andrew, and Mr. Buxton, — the latter almost covered with blacks. The clamor was terrific, and I really expected that the poor foremen who held the pipes would be torn in pieces. Everybody wanted to command the Coldstream. Nothing but shouts of "Here! here! here!" answered like an Irish echo by cries of "There! there! there!" "Oh, save my savings!" — "My poor, Poor Bill!" "More water — more water for my Drunkenness!" "Work awa, lads, work awa — it 's no the Sabbath, and ye may just play at what ye like!"

In pleasing contrast to this tumult was the unusual and cordial unanimity of the members of both Houses, in rescuing whatever was portable from the flames. It was a delightful novelty to see the Lords helping the Commons in whatever they moved or carried. No party spirit — no Whig, pulling at one leg of the table, whilst a Tory tugged at another in the opposite direction. They seemed to belong to the Hand-in-

Hand. Peers and Commoners were alike seen burdened with loads of papers or furniture. Mr. Calvert, in particular, worked liked any porter. Of course, in rescuing the papers and parchments there was no time for inspecting their contents, and some curious results were the consequence. Everybody remembers the pathetic story in the Tatler, of the lover who saved a strange lady from a burning theatre, under the idea that he was preserving the mistress of his affections, and some similar mistakes are currently reported to have occurred at the late conflagration — and equally to the chagrin of the parties. I go by hearsay, and cannot vouch for the facts, but it is said that the unpopular Six Acts, including what I believe is called the Gagging Act, were actually preserved by Mr. Cobbett. Mr. O'Connell saved the Irish Coercion Bill, whilst the Reform Bill was snatched like "a brand out of the fire" by a certain noble Duke, who resolutely set his face against it in all its stages! Amongst others, Mr. Ricardo saved an old tattered flag, which he thought was "the standard of value."

However deficient in general combination and concentration of energies, individual efforts were beyond all praise. The instances of personal exertion and daring were numerous. Mr. Rice worked amidst the flames till he was nearly baked; and everybody expected that Mr. Pease would be parched. The greatest danger was from the melted metal pouring down from the windows and roof. The heads of some of the Hon. Gentlemen were literally nothing but lead. Great apprehensions were entertained of the falling in of one of the walls, which eventually gave way; but fortunately everybody had retreated on the timely warning of a gentleman, Mr. O'Connell, I believe, who declared that he saw a Rent in it.

I did not enter the House of Lords, which was now one mass of glowing fire, but directed my attention towards the Speaker's mansion, which was partially burning. The garden behind was nearly filled with miscellaneous property — and numbers of well-dressed gentlemen were every moment rushing into the house, from which they issued again, laden with spits, saucepans, and other culinary implements. I myself saw one zealous individual thus encumbered — with a stew-pan on his head, the meat-screen under one arm, the dripping-pan under the other, the frying-pan in his right hand, the grid-iron in his left, and the rolling-pin in his mouth. Indeed, it

is said that every article in the kitchen was saved down to the salt-box; and the cook declares that such was the anxiety to save her she was "cotched up in twelve gentlemen's arms, and never felt her feet till the corner of Abingdon Street."

The whole of the Foot Guards were in attendance, as well as a great number of police, but the thieves had mustered in great force, and there was a good deal of plundering, which was however checked temporarily by a gentleman said to be one of the members and magistrates for Essex, who jumped up on a railing and addressed the populace to the following effect, "How do you hall dare!"

The origin of the fire is involved in much mystery; nor is it correctly ascertained by whom it was first discovered. Some say that one of the sergeants, in taking up the insignia, was astonished to find the mace as hot as ginger. Others relate that a Mr. Spell, or Shell, or Snell, whilst viewing the House, although no dancer, began suddenly, and in his boots, to the utter amazement of his companions and Mrs. Wright, the housekeeper, to jump and caper like a bear upon a hotted floor. This story certainly seems to countenance a report that the mischief originated in the warming apparatus, — an opinion that is very current; but, for my own part, I cannot conceive that the Collective Wisdom, which knows how to lay down laws for us all, should not know how to lay down flues. Rumors of incendiarism are also very generally prevalent, and stories are in circulation of the finding of half-burnt matches and other combustibles. But these facts rest on very frail foundations. The links said to have been found in the Speaker's garden have turned out to be nothing but German sausages; and another cock-and-a-bull that has got abroad will probably come to no better end. A Mr. Dudley affirms that he smelt the fire before it broke out, at Cooper's Hill; but such olfactories are too much like manufactories to be believed. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

X. Y. Z.

Another Account.

The writer of these lines, who resides in Lambeth, was first awakened to a sense of conflagration by a cry of "Fire!" from a number of persons who were running in the direction

of Westminster Bridge. Owning myself a warm enthusiast on the subject of ignition, and indeed not having missed a fire for the last fifty years, except one, and that was only a chimney, it may be supposed the exclamation in question had an electric effect. We are all the slaves of some physical bias, strange as it may appear to others with opposite tendencies. It is recorded of some great marshal that he disliked music, but testified the liveliest pleasure at a salvo of artillery or a roll of thunder, and the rumble of an engine has the same effect on the author of these lines. To say I am a guebre, or fire-worshipper, is only to confess the truth. I have a sort of observatory erected on the roof of my house, from which, if there be a break-out within the circuit of the metropolis, it may be discovered, and before going to bed I invariably visit this look-out.

Every man has his hobby-horse, and, figuratively speaking, mine was always kept harnessed and ready to run to a fire with the first engine. Many a time I have arrived before the turncocks, though I perhaps had to traverse half London, and I scarcely remember an instance that I did not appear long before the water. Habit is second nature — I verily believe I could sniff a conflagration by instinct; and if I was not, ought to have been, the trainer of the firemen's dog, which at present attracts so much of the public attention, by his eager running along with the Sun, the Globe, the British, and the Hand-in-Hand.

Of course I have seen a great many fires in my time, — Rotherhithe, the theatres, the Custom-house, &c., &c. I remember in the days of Thistlewood and Co., when the metropolis was expected to be set on fire, I slept for three weeks in my clothes in order to be ready for the first alarm; for I had the good fortune to witness the great riots of 1780, when no less than eight fires were blazing at once, and a lamentable sight it was. I say lamentable, because it was impossible to be present at them all at the same time; but my good genius directed me to Langdale's the Distiller, which made (excuse the vulgar popular phrase) a very satisfactory flare-up.

The Rotherhithe fire, not the recent little job, but some fifteen or twenty years ago, was also on a grand scale, and very lasting. The engine-pipes were wilfully cut; and I remember some of my friends, rallying me on my well-known

propensity, jocularly accusing me of lending my knife and my assistance. The Custom-house was a disappointment; it certainly cleared itself effectually, but it was done by daylight, and consequently the long-room fell short of my anticipations.

"'T IS DISTANCE LENDS ENCHANTMENT TO THE VIEW."

Drury-lane and Covent-garden were better; but I have observed generally that theatres burn with more attention to stage effect. They avoid the noon: a dark night to a fire is like the black letters in a benefit-bill, setting off the red ones.

The destruction of the Kent Indiaman I should like to have witnessed, but, contrary to the opinion of many experienced amateurs, I conceive the Dartford Mills must have been a failure. Powder-magazines make very indifferent conflagrations; they are no sooner on fire than they are off, — all is over before you know where you are, and there is no getting under, which quite puts you out. But fires, generally, are not what they used to be. What with gas, and new police, steam, and one cause or other, they have become what one might call

slow explosions. A body of flame bursts from all the windows at once, and before B. 25 can call fi-er in two syllables, the roof falls in, and all is over. It was not so in *my* time. First a little smoke would issue from a window-shutter, like the puff of a cigar, and after a long spring of his rattle, the rheumatic watchman had time to knock double and treble knocks, from No. 9 to No. 35, before a spark made its appearance out of the chimney-pot. The Volunteers had time to assemble under arms, and muffle their drums, and the bell-ringers to collect in the belfry, and pull an alarm peal backwards. The parish engines even, although pulled along by the pursy churchwardens, and the paralytic paupers, contrived to arrive before the fire fairly broke out in the shape of a little squib-like eruption from the garret-window. The affrighted family, fourteen in number, all elaborately dressed in their best Sunday clothes, saved themselves by the street-door, according to seniority, the furniture was carefully removed, and after an hour's pumping, the fire was extinguished without extending beyond the room where it originated, namely, a bedroom on the second floor. Such was the progress *in my time* of a fire, but it is the fashion now to sacrifice everything to *pace*. Look at our race-horses, and look at our fox-hounds, — and I will add, look at our conflagrations. All that is cared for is a burst, — no matter how short, if it be but rapid. The devouring element never sits down now to a regular meal — it pitches on a house and *bolts* it.

But I am wandering from the point. The announcement of both Houses of Parliament being in flames thrilled through every fibre. It seemed to promise what I may call a crowning event to the Conflagrationary Reminiscences of an Octogenarian. I snatched up my hat, and rushed into the street, at eighty years of age, with the alacrity of eighteen, when I ran from Highgate to Horselydown, to be present at the gutting of a ship-chandler's. As the bard says, —

"Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted *fires*,"

and I could almost have supposed myself a fireman belonging to the Phœnix. My first step into the street discouraged me, the moonlight was so brilliant, and in such cases the most splendid blaze is somewhat "shorn of its beams." But a few steps reassured me. Even at the Surrey side of the river

the sparks and burning particles were falling like flakes of snow — I mean of course the red snow formerly discovered by Captain Ross, and the light was so great that I could have read the small print of the Police Gazette with the greatest ease, only I don't take it in. I of course made the best of my way towards the scene, but the crowd was already so dense that I could only attain a situation on the strand opposite Cotton Gardens, up to my knees in mud. Both Houses of Parliament were at this time in a blaze, and no doubt presented as striking objects of conflagration as the metropolis could offer. I say, "no doubt," — for getting jammed against a barge with my back towards the fire, I am unable to state anything on my own authority as an eyewitness, excepting that the buildings on the Surrey side exhibited a glowing reflection for some hours. At last the flowing of the tide caused the multitude to retreat, and releasing me from my retrospective position allowed me to gaze upon the ruins. By what I hear, it was a most imposing sight; but, in spite of my Lord Althorp, I cannot help thinking that Westminster Hall, with its long range, would have made up an admirable fire. Neither can I agree with the many that it was an Incendiary Act, that passed through both houses so rapidly. To enjoy the thing, a later hour and a darker night would certainly have been chosen. Fire-light and moon-light do not *mix well:* — they are best *neat.*

I am, Sir, Yours, &c.
SENEX.

Various Accounts.

We are concerned to state that Sir Jacob Jubb, the new member for Shrops, was severely burnt, by taking his seat in the House on a bench that was burning under him. The danger of his situation was several times pointed out to him; but he replied that his seat had cost him ten thousand pounds, and he would n't quit. He was at length removed by force. — *Morning Ledger.*

A great many foolish anecdotes of the fire are in circulation. One of our contemporaries gravely asserts that the Marquis of Culpepper was the last person who left the South Turret, a fact we beg leave to question, for the exquisite

reason that the noble Lord alluded to is at present at Constantinople. — *The Real Sun.*

We are enabled to state that the individual who displayed so much coolness in the South Turret was Captain Back. — *The Public Journal.*

FANCY PORTRAIT: — CAPTAIN BACK.

It is said that considerable interest was evinced by the members of the House of Commons who were present at the fire, as to the fate of their respective Bills. One honorable gentleman, in particular, was observed anxiously watching the last scintillations of some burnt paper. "Oh, my Sabbath Observance!" he exclaimed. "There 's an end of religion! There go the Parson and Clerk!" — *Public Diary.*

The Earl of M. had a very narrow escape. His Lordship was on the point of kicking a bucket, when a laborer rushed forward and snatched it out of the way. The individual's name is M'Farrel. We understand he is a sober, honest, hard-working man, and has two wives, and a numerous family; the eldest not above a year old. — *Daily Chronicle.*

The exclamation of a noble Lord, high in office, who was

very active at the fire, has been very incorrectly given. The words were as follows: "Blow the Commons! let 'em flare up — but oh — for a save-all! a save-all!" — *Morning News.*

The public attention has been greatly excited by the extraordinary statement of a commercial gentleman, that he smelt the fire at the Cock and Bottle, in Coventry. He asserts that he mentioned the fact in the commercial room to a deaf gentleman, and likewise to a dumb waiter, but neither have any recollection of the circumstance. He has been examined before the Common Council, who have elicited that he actually arrived at Coventry on the night in question, by the Tally-ho! and the near leader of that coach has been sent for by express. — *New Monitor.*

We were in error in stating that the Atlas was the first engine at the scene of action. So early as five o'clock Mr. Alderman A. arrived with his own garden-engine, and began immediately to play upon the Thames. — *British Guardian.*

It must have struck every one who witnessed the operations in the House of Commons, that there was a lamentable want of "order! order! order!" A great many gentlemen succeeded in making pumps of themselves, without producing any check on the flames. The conduct of the military also was far from unexceptionable. On the arrival of the Coldstream at the fire they actually refused to fall in. Many declined to stand at ease on the burning rafters — but what is the public interest to a private? — *Public Advertiser.*

Monsieur C.'s Account. (*Exclusive.*)

When I am come first to the fire it was not long burnt up; and I was oblige to walk up and down the floor to keep myself warm. At last, I take my seat on the stove, quite convenient to look about. In the House of Commons there was nobody, and I am all alone. The first thing I observe was a great many rats, ratting about — but they did not know which way to turn. So they were all burnt dead. The flames grew very fast; and I am interested very much with the seats, how they burned, quite different from one another. Some seats made what you call a great splutter, and popped, and bounced, and some other seats made no noise at all. Mr. Bulwer's place burned off a blue color; Mr. Buckstone's turned quite

black; and there was one made a flame the color of a drab. I observe one green flame and one orange, side by side, and they hiss and roar at one another very furious. The gallery cleared itself quite quickly, and the seat of Messieurs the reporters exploded itself like a cannon of forty-eight pounds. The speaking chair burnt without any sound at all.

When everything is quite done in the Commons I leave them off, and go to the House of Lords, where the fire was all in one sheet, and almost the whole of its inside burnt out. I was able in this room to take off my great-coat. I could find nothing to be saved except one great inkstand, that was red-hot, and which I carry away in my two hands. Likewise here, as well as in the Commons, I bottled up several bottles of smoke, to distribute afterwards, at five guineas apiece, and may be more; for I know the English people admire such things, and are fond after relics, like a madness almost. I did not make a long stop, for whenever I was visible, the pompiers was so foolish as play water upon me, and I was afraid of a catch-cold. In fact, when I arrive at home, I find myself stuffed in my head, and fast in my chest, and my throat was a little horse. I am going for it into a bath of boiling water, and cannot write any more at full length."

A Letter to a Laboring Man.

BUSHELL, —

When you made a holiday last Whitsuntide to see the Sights of London, in your way to the Wax-Work and Westminster Abbey, you probably noticed a vast pile of buildings in Palace Yard, and you stood and scratched that shock head of yours, and wondered whose fine houses they were. Seeing you to be a country clodpole, no doubt some well-dressed vagabond, by way of putting a hoax upon the hawbuck, told you that in those buildings congregated all the talent, all the integrity and public spirit of the country — that beneath those roofs the best and wisest, and the most honest men to be found in three kingdoms, met to deliberate and enact the most wholesome and just and judicious laws for the good of the nation. He called them the oracles of our constitution, the guardians of our rights, and the assertors of our liberties. Of course, Bushell, you were told all this; but nobody told you,

I dare say, that within those walls your master had lifted up his voice, and delivered the only sound, rational, and wholesome, upright, and able speeches that were ever uttered in St. Stephen's Chapel. No, nobody told you that. But when I come home, Bushell, I will lend you all my printed speeches, and when you have spelt them, and read them, and studied them, and got them by heart, bumpkin as you are, Bushell, you will know as much of legislation as all our precious members together.

"OUR CONSTITUTION'S GONE!"

Well, Bushell, the fine houses you stood gaping at are burnt down, gutted, as the vulgar call it, and nothing is left but the bare walls. You saw Farmer Gubbins's house, or, at least, the shell of it, after the fire there; well, the Parliament Houses are exactly in the same state. There is news for you! and now, Bushell, how do you feel? Why, if the well-dressed vagabond told you the truth, you feel as if you had had a stroke — for all the British Constitution is affected, and you are a fraction of it, that is to say, a British subject. Your bacon grows rusty in your mouth, and your table-beer

turns to vinegar on your palate. You cannot sleep at night, or work by day. You have no heart for anything. You can hardly drag one clouted shoe after another. And how do you look? Why, as pale as a parsnep, and as thin as a hurdle, and your carrotty locks stand bolt upright as if you had just met old Lawson's ghost with his head under his arm. I say thus you must feel and look, Bushell, if what the well-dressed vagabond told you is the truth. But is that the case? No. You drink your small-beer with a sigh and smack of delight; and you bolt your bacon with a relish, as if, as the virtuous Americans say, you could "go the whole hog." Your clouted shoes clatter about as if you were counting hob-nails with the Lord Mayor, and you work like a young horse, or an old ass, and at night you snore like an oratorio of jews'-harps. Your face is as bold and ruddy as the Red Lion's. Your carrotty locks lie sleek upon your poll, and as for poor old Lawson's ghost, you could lend him flesh and blood enough to set him up again in life. But what, say you, does all this tend to? I will tell you, Bushell. There are a great many well-dressed vagabonds, besides the one you met in Palace Yard, who would persuade a poor man that a House of Lords or Commons is as good to him as his bread, beer, beef, bacon, bed, and breeches; and therefore I address this to you, Bushell, to set such notions to rights by an appeal to your own back and belly. And now I will tell you what you shall do. You shall go three nights a week to the Red Lion (when your work is done), and you may score up a pint of beer, at my cost, each time. And when the parson, or the exciseman, or the tax-gatherer, or any such gentry, begin to talk of the deplorable great burning, and the national calamity, and such-like trash, you shall pull out my letter and read to them — I say, Bushell, you shall read this letter to them, twice over, loudly and distinctly, and tell them from me that the burning of twenty Parliament Houses wound n't be such a national calamity as a fire at No. 1 Bolt Court.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

To Mary Price, Fenny Hall, Lincolnshire.

O MARY, —

I am writing in such a quiver, with my art in my mouth, and my tung sticking to it. For too hole hours I 've bean Doin nothink but taking on and going off, I mean into fits, or crying and blessing goodness for my miraclus escape. This day week I wear inwallopped in flams, and thinkin of roth to cum, and fire evverlasting. But thenks to Diving Providings, hear I am, althowgh with loss of wan high brew scotched off, a noo cap and my rite shew. But I hav bean terrifid to deth. Wen I was ate, or it mite be nine, I fell on the stow, and hav had a grate dred of fire evver since. Gudge then how low I felt at the idear of burning along with the Lords and Communer's. It as bean a Warnin, and never, no, never never never agin will I go to Clandestiny parties behind Mississis backs. I now see my errer, but temtashun prevaled, tho the cloven fut of the Wicked Wan had a hand in it all: O Mary, down on yure marrybones, and bless yure stars for sitiating you in a loanly stooped poky place, wear you cant be lead into liteness and gayty, if you was evver so inclind. Fore wipping willies and a windmill is a dullish luck out, shure enuff, but its better then moor ambishus prospex, and stairing at a grate fire, like a suckin pig, till yure eyes is reddy to drop out of yure hed!

You no wen Lady Manners is absent, a certin person allways givs a good rowt: — and I had a card in Coarse. I went verry ginteel, my Cloke cost I wont say Wot, and a hat and fethers to match. But it warnt to be. After takin off my things, I had barely set down, wen at the front dore there cums a dubble nock without any end to it, and a ring of the bell at the saim time, like a triangle keepin cumpany with a big drum. As soon as the door were opened a man with a pail face asked for the buckits, and that was the fust news we had of the fire. O Mary, never trust to the mail sects! They are all Alick from the Botcher and Backer that flurts at the front dore, down to the deer dissevers you throw away yure arts upon. For all their fine purfessions, they are ony

filling yure ears with picrust, they make trifles of yure afections, and destroy yure comfits for life. They think no moore of parjuring themselvs then I do of sweeping the earth. If yure wise you will sit yure face agin all menkind and luv nonsense, as I meen to in futer, or may be, wen you are dreeming of brid cake and wite fevers, you may find yureself left with nothink but breeches of prommis. John Futman is

"WHY DON'T THE MEN PROPOSE?"

a proof in pint. Menny tims Ive giv him a hiding at number fore, and he allways had the best of the lardur at our stolin meatings, and God nose Ive offun alloud him to idelize me wen I ort to hav bean at my wurks, besides larning to rite for his sack. Twenty housis afire ort not to hav abaited his warmth, insted of witch to jump up at the fust allurm and run away, leaving me to make my hone shifts. A treu luver wood have staid to shear my fat. O Mary, if ever there was a terryfickle spectikle that was won! Flams before and flams behind, and flams overhead. Sich axing and hollowing out, and mobbing and pumpin, and cussing and swaring, and the peple's rushes into the Hous purvented all gitting out. For my hone parts, I climed up the dresser, and skreeked, but nobbody was man enuff to purtect. Men ant what they

was. I am sick of the retches! It used to be femails fust, but now its furniter. I fully thort one gintleman was comin to cotch me up in arms, but he prefered the fish kettle. As for the sogers they marcht off to the wind seller, and the pantry, ware they maid beleave to preserve the gusberry gam. How I was reskewd at last Lord nose, for my hed was unsensible tell I found meself setten on the pickid pinted ralings of St. Margret's Church, with my fethers all frizzild, and a shew off. But of all lossis, my ridicule was most serius, for it had my puss in it.

How and ware it broke out is a mistery. Sum say both Howses was under minded. Sum say the Common members got over heatid in there fluency. A grate deal of property was burned, in spit of Lord Allthorp, who ingaged every cotch, cab, and gobbing porter as conveyancers. Westmunster may thenk his Lordship it did not lose its All. They say the Lords and Communs was connectid with a grate menny historicle associashuns, wich of coarse will hav to make good all dammage.

Fortnately, the Speker's mornin, noon, and evning services of plait was not at home, or it mite hav sufferd, for they say goold and silver as stud the fire verry well, melted down when it got furthur off. Tauking of plait a gentilman, who giv his card, Mr. William Soames, were verry kind and partickler in his inquerries efter Mr. Speker's vallybles. I hope he will hav a place givn him for his indevvers.

Ware the poor burnt-out creturs will go noboddy nose. Sum say Exter Hall, sum say the Refudge for the Destitut, and sum say the King will lend them his Bensh to set upon! All I no is, I've had a frite that will go with me to my grave. I am allways snifing fire by day and dreeming on it by nite. Ony last Fryday I allarmd the hole naberhood by screaching out of winder for the warter to be plugged up. Liting fires, or striking lite, or making tindur, throes me into fits.

I shall nevver be the womman I was; but that is no excus for John's unconstancy. I don't dare to take my close off to go to bed, and I practice clambering up and down by a rop in case, and I giv police M 25 a shillin now and than to keep a specious eye to number fore, and be reddy to ketch anny won in his harms. But it cums to munny, and particly givin the ingin keeper a pint of bear from time to time, and drams to

the turncox: where there 's nabers fires will happen, howevver cerefull and precocius you may be youreself. I dred our too nex dores; number three is a Gurmin fammily, and them orrid forriners think nothink of smocking siggars in bed, witch will ketch sum day to a curtainty. Number fiv is wus; since his wif 's deth Mr. Sanders has betuck himself to comicle studis, and offin has a littel blo up amung his pistles and morters. O! Mary, how happy is them as livs lick you, as the song says, "Fur from the buzzy aunts of men." If yu 're inflamd its nobbody's folt but yure hone. Pray take the gratest car. Have yure eyes about you, and luck out for sparks; watever the men may say, don't allow backer pips or long snufs, and let evvery boddy be thurrowly put out. Don't neglect to rake out evvery nite, see that evvery sole in the hows is turnd down or xtinguished, and allways blo yureself out befour you go to yure piller. Thenk gudness you nevver larnd to reed, and therefor will not take anny bucks to bed with you. Allways ware stuff or woollin, insted of lite cottons and gingums, in case of the coles throwin out coffens or pusses, by witch menny persons gains their ends. In case of yure pettycots catchin don't forgit standin on yure hed, as recommended by the Human Society, becoz fire burns uppards, but its a posishun as requiers practis. Have yure chimbly swept reglar wonce a munth, and wen visiters cum neveer put hot coles in the warmin pan, for fear you forgit and leave it in the spair bed. Remember fire is a good sarvent but a bad master, and sure enuff wen it is master it never gives a sarvent a munth's notis. To be shure we have won marsy in town that is unbenone in the country, and that is Swingeing; there is no cornstax or heyrix in St. Jims's Square. That is yure week pint, and I trembil for the barns; a rockite or a roaming candel mite set you in a blaze. But I hop and trust wat I say will never pruve the truth. Oppydildock is good for burns, and I am, dear Mary,

Yure old and afexionate feller sarvent,

ANN GALE.

THE JUBB LETTERS.

From Lady Jubb to Mrs. Phipps, Housekeeper at the Shrubbery, Shrewsbury, Shrops.

MRS. PHIPPS, —

You will prepare the house directly for the family's return, not that our coming back is absolutely certain, but events have happened to render our stay in Portland-Place very precarious. All depends upon Sir Jacob. In Parliament or out of Parliament his motions must guide ours. By this time what has happened will be known in Shropshire, but I forbid your talking. Politics belong to people of property, and those who have no voice in the country ought not to speak. In your inferior situations it's a duty to be ignorant of what you know. The nation is out of your sphere, and besides, people out of town cannot know the state of the country. I want to put you on your guard; thanks to the press, as Sir Jacob says, public affairs cannot be kept private, and the consequence is, the ignorant are as well informed as their betters. The burning of both Houses of Parliament I am afraid cannot be hushed up — but it is not a subject for servants, that have neither upper nor lower members amongst them, and represent nobody, I trust to you, Mrs. Phipps, to discourage all discussions in the kitchen, which is n't the place for parliamentary canvassing. The most ridiculous notions are abroad. I should not be surprised even to hear that Sir Jacob had lost his seat, because the benches were burnt, but we have been deprived of none of our dignities or privileges. You will observe this letter is *franked;* the fire made no difference to your master, he is not dissolved, whatever the Blues may wish — he is still Sir Jacob Jubb, Baronet, M. P.

The election of Sir Jacob at such a crisis was an act of Providence. His firmness at the fire affords an example to posterity; although the bench was burning under him he refused to retreat, replying emphatically, "I will sit by my order." As far as this goes you may mention, and no more. I enjoin upon all else a diplomatic silence. Sir Jacob himself will write to the bailiff, and whatever may be the nature of his directions, I desire that no curiosity may be indulged in,

and above all, that you entertain no opinions of your own. You cannot square with the upper circles. I would write more, but I am going to a meeting, I need not say where, or upon what subject. I rely, Mrs. Phipps, on your discretion, and am, &c.,

ARABELLA ANASTASIA JUBB.

To T. Crawfurd, junior, Esquire, the Beeches, near Shrewsbury, Shrops.

DEAR TOM,—

Throw up your cap and huzza. There's glorious news, and so you'll say when I tell you. I could almost jump out of my skin for joy! Father's dismembered! The House of Commons caught fire, and he was dissolved along with the rest.

I've never been happy since we came up to London, and all through Parliament. The election was good sport enough. I liked the riding up and down, and carrying a flag; and the battle, with sticks, between the Blues and the Yellows, was famous fun; and I huzzaed myself hoarse at our getting the day at last. But after that came the jollup, as we used to say at Old Busby's. Theme writing was a fool to it. If father composed one maiden speech he composed a hundred, and he made me knuckle down and copy them all out, and precious stupid stuff it was. A regular physicker, says you, and I'd worse to take after it. He made us all sit down and hear him spout them, and a poor stick he made. Dick Willis, that we used to call Handpost, was a dab at it compared to him. He's no better hand at figures, so much the worse for me. Did you ever have a fag, Tom, at the national debt? I don't know who owes it, but I wish he'd pay it, or be made bankrupt at once. I've worked more sums last month than ever I did at school in the half year,—geography the same. I had to hunt out Don Carlos and Don Pedro, all over the maps. I came in for a regular wigging one day, for wishing both the Dons were well peppered, as Tom Tough says. I've seen none of the sights I wanted to see. He would n't let me go to the play, because he says the theatres are bad schools, and would give me a vicious style of elocution. The only pleasure he promised me was to sit in the

gallery at the Commons and see him present his petitions. Short-hand would have come next, that I might take down his speechifying — for he says the reporters all garble. An't I well out of it all — and a place he was to get for me besides, from the Prime Minister? I suppose the Navy Pay, to sit on a high stool and give Jack Junk one pound two and ninepence twice a year. I'd rather be Jack Junk himself, would n't you, Tom? But father 's lost his wicket, and huzza for Shropshire! In hopes of our soon meeting, I remain, my dear Tom,

Your old chum and schoolfellow,
FREDERICK JUBB.

P. S. — A court gentleman has just come in, with a knock-me-down-again. He says there 's to be a new election. I wish you 'd do something; it would be a real favor, and I will do as much for you another time. What I want of you is, to get your father to set up against mine. Do try, Tom — there 's a good fellow. I will ask everybody I know to give your side a plumper.

To Mr. Roger Davis, Bailiff, the Shrubbery, near Shrewsbury.

DAVIS,

I hope to God this will find you at home — I am writing in a state of mind bordering on madness. I can't collect myself to give particulars — you will have a newspaper along with this — read that, and your hair will stand on end. Incendiarism has reached its height like the flaming thing on the top of the Monument. Our crisis is come. To my mind — political suicide — is as bad as *felo de se*. O Whigs, Whigs, Whigs — what have you brought us to! As the Britannic Guardian well says — England is gone to Italy — London is at Naples — and we are all standing on the top of Vesuvius. I have heard and I believe it — that an attempt has been made to choke Aldgate Pump. A Waltham Abbey paper says positively that the mills were recently robbed of 513 barrels of powder, the exact number of the members for England and Wales. What a diabolical refinement — to blow up a government with its own powder! I can hardly persuade myself I am in England. God knows where it will spread to — I mean

the incendiary spirit. The dry season is frightful — I suppose the springs are all dry. Keep the engine locked in the stable, for fear of a cut at the pipes. I 'll send you down two more. Let all the laborers take a turn at them, by way of practice. I 'm persuaded the Parliament houses were burnt on purpose. The flue story is ridiculous. Mr. Cooper's is a great deal more to the point. I believe everything I hear. A bunch of matches was found in the Speaker's kitchen. I saw something suspicious myself — some said treacle, but I say tar. Have your eyes about you — lock all the gates, day as well as night — and above all, watch the stacks. One Tiger is not enough — get three or four more, I should have said Cæsar, but you know I mean the house-dog. Good mastiffs, — the biggest and savagest you can get. The gentry will be attempted first — beginning with the M.P.'s. You and Barnes and Sam must sit up by turns — and let the maids sit up too — women have sharp ears, and sharp tongues. — If a mouse stirs I would have them squall — danger or no danger. It 's the only way to sleep in security — and comfort. I have read that the common goose is a vigilant creature — and saved Rome. Get a score of them — at the next market — don't stand about price — but choose them with good cackles. Alarm them now and then to keep them watchful. Fire the blunderbuss off every night, and both fowling-pieces and all the pistols. If all the Gentry did as much, it might keep the country quiet. If you were to ring the alarm-bell once or twice in the middle of the night, it would be as well — you would know then what help to depend upon. Search the house often from the garret to the cellar, for combustibles — if you could manage to go without candles, or any sort of light, it would be better.

You 'd find your way about in the dark after a little practice. Pray don't allow any sweethearts; they may be Swings and Captain Rocks in disguise, and their pretended flames turn out real. I 've misgivings about the maids. Tie them up, and taste their liver, before they eat it themselves — I mean the house-dogs; but my agitation makes me unconnected. The scoundrels often poison them, before they attempt robbery and arson. Keep the cattle in the cow-house for fear of their being houghed and hamstrung. Surely there were great defects somewhere. The Houses could not have been properly

protected — if they had been watched as well as they were lighted — but it is too late to cast any blame on individuals. A paltry spirit of economy has been our bane. A few shillings would have purchased a watch-dog; and one or two geese in each house might have saved the capitol of the constitution! But the incendiary knew how to choose his time — an adjournment when there were none sitting. I say, incendiary, because no doubt can exist in any cool mind, that enters into the conflagration. I transcribe conclusive extracts from several papers, the editors of which I know to be upright men, and they all write on one side.

"We are confidently informed," says the Beacon, "that a quantity of tar-barrels was purchased at No. 2 High Street, Shadwell, about ten o'clock on the morning of the fire. There was abundant time before six A. M. for removing the combustibles to Westminster. The purchaser was a short, squat, down-looking man, and the name on his cart was I. Burns."

"Trifling circumstances," says the Sentinel, "sometimes point to great results. Our own opinion is formed. We have made it our business to examine the Guys in preparation for the impending anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, and we affirm, that every one of the effigies bore a striking resemblance to some member or other of assemblies we need not name. These are signs of the times."

"We should be loath," says the Detector, "to impute the late calamity to any particular party; but we may reasonably inquire what relative stake in the country is possessed by the Whigs and the Tories. The English language may be taken as a fair standard. The first may lay claim to perri-*wig*, scratch-*wig*, tie-*wig*, bob-*wig*, in short, the whole family of perruques, with *whig*maleery. The latter, not to mention other good things, have a vested right in ora*tory*, his*tory*, terri*tory*, and vic*tory*. Can a man of common patriotism have a doubt which side it is his interest to adhere to?"

That last paragraph, Davis, is what I call sound argument. Indeed I don't see how it is to be answered. You see they are all *nem. con.* as to our danger, and decidedly reckon fire an inflammatory agent. Take care what you read. Very pernicious doctrines are abroad, and especially across the Western Channel. The Irish are really frightful. I'm told they tie the cows' tails together, and then saw off their horns

for insurrectionary bugles. The foundations of society are shaken all over the world — the Whiteboys in Ireland, and the Blacks in the West Indies, all seem to fight under the same colors. It 's time for honest men to rally round themselves — but I 'm sorry to say public spirit and love of one's country are at a low ebb. There 's too much Americanism. One writer wants us to turn all our English wheat to Indian corn, and to grow no sort of apples but Franklin pippins. We want strong measures against associations and unions. There 's demagogues abroad — and they wear white hats. By the by, I more than half suspect that fellow Johnson is a delegate. Take him to the ale-house, and treat him freely — it may warm him to blab something. Besides, you will see what sort of papers the public-houses take in. You may drop a hint about their licenses. Give my compliments to Dr. Garratt, and tell him I hope he will preach to the times and take strong texts. I wish I could be down amongst you, but I cannot desert my post. You may tell the tenantry, and electors — I 'm burnt out and gutted — but my heart 's in the right place — and devoted to constituents. Come what may, I will be an unshaken pillar on the basis of my circular letter. don't forget any of my precautions. I am sorry I did not bring all the plate up to town — but at the first alarm bury it. Take in no letters or notices; for what you know they may be threatenings. If any Irishman applies for work, discharge him instantly. All the old spring-guns had better be set again, they are not now legal, but I am ministerial, and if they did go off, the higher powers would perhaps wink at them. But it 's fire that I am afraid of, fire that destroyed my political roof, and may now assail my paternal one. Walk, as I may say, bucket in hand, and be ready every moment for a breakout. You may set fire to the small fagot-stack, and try your hands at getting it under — there 's nothing worse than being taken by surprise. Read this letter frequently, and impress these charges on your mind. It is a sad change for England to have become, I may say, this fiery furnace. I have not the least doubt, if properly traced, the burning cliff at Weymouth would be found to be connected with incendiarism, and the earthquakes at Chichester with our political convulsions. Thank Providence in your prayers, Davis, that your own station forbids your being an M. P., for a place in Parliament

is little better than sitting on a barrel of gunpowder. Honor forbids to resign, or I should wish I was nothing but a simple country gentleman. Remember, and be vigilant. Once more I cry Watch, Watch, Watch! By adopting the motions I propose, a conflagration may be adjourned *sine die*, which is a petition perpetually presented by

Your anxious but uncompromising Master,
JACOB JUBB, M. P.

To Lady Jubb, at 45 Portland Place.

RESPECTED MADAM, —

I received your Ladyship's obliging commands, and have used my best endeavors to conform to the wishes condescended therein. In respect to political controversy, I beg to say I have imposed a tacit silence on the domestic capacities as far as within the sphere of my control, but lament to say the Bailiff, Mr. Davis, is a party unamenable to my authority, and as such has taken liberties with decorum quite unconsistent with propriety and the decency due. However reluctant to censoriousness, duty compels to communicate subversive conduct quite unconformable to decency's rules and order in a well-regulated establishment. I allude to Mr. Davis's terrifically jumping out from behind doors and in obscure dark corners, on the female domestics, for no reasonable purpose I can discover, except to make them exert their voices in a very alarming manner. The housemaid, indeed, confirms me by saying in her own words "he considered her skreek the best skreek in the family." If impropriety had proceeded no further, I should have hesitated to trouble your Ladyship with particulars; but Mr. Davis, not satisfied with thus working on the unsophisticated terrors of ignorant females, thought proper to horrify with inflammatory reports. One night, as a prominent instance, about twelve o'clock, he rang the alarm-bell so violently, at the same time proclaiming conflagration, that the law of preservation became our paramount duty, and, as a consequence, we all escaped in a state of dishabille only to be ambiguously hinted at, by saying that time did not allow to put on my best lutestring to meet the neighboring gentry — and must add, with indignation, in the full blaze of a heap of straw, thought proper to be set on fire by Mr. Davis in the

fore-court. I trust your Ladyship will excuse a little warmth of language, in saying it was highly reprehensible; but I have not depictured the worst. I, one evening, lighted up what I conceived to be a mould candle, and your Ladyship will imagine my undescribable fright when it exploded itself like a missile of the squib description, an unwarrantable mode, I must say, of convincing me, as Mr. Davis had the audaciousness to own to, that we may be made to be actors in our own combustion. To suppose at my years and experience, I can be unsensible of the danger of fire, must be a preposterous notion; but all his subsequent acts partake an agreeable character. For fear of being consumed in our beds, as he insidiously professed, he exerted all his influential arguments to persuade the females to set up nocturnally all night, a precaution of course declined, as well as his following scheme, being almost too much broached with absurdity to enumerate. I mean every retiring female reposing her confidence on a live goose in her chamber, as were purchased for the express purpose, but need not add were dispensed with by rational beings. I trust your Ladyship will acquit of uncharitableness if I suspect it was out of vindictive feelings at their opposition to the geese, that Mr. Davis insinuated a strict inquiry into every individual that came into the house, as far even as requiring to be personally present at all that passed between the dairymaid and her cousin. It escaped memory to say that when the feminine department refused to be deprived of rest, the male servants were equally adverse to go to bed, being spirited up by Mr. Davis to spend the night together, and likewise being furnished with the best strong ale in the cellar, by his imperious directions, which, by way of climax to assurance, was alleged to be by order of Sir Jacob himself. I say nothing reflectively on his repeatedly discharging his artillery at unseasonable hours, the shock principally concerning my own nervous constitution, which was so vibrated as to require calling in physical powers; and Doctor Tudor, considering advanced age and infirmity, is of opinion I may require to be under his professional hands for an ensuing twelvemonth. Of startling effects upon other parties I may make comments more unreserved, and without harsh extenuation must say, his letting off reports without due notice, frequently when the females had valuable cut glass and china in their hands, or on

their trays, was blamable in the extreme, to express the least of it. Another feature which caused much unpleasantness, was Mr. Davis persisting to scrutinize and rummage the entire premises from top to bottom, but on this characteristic tediousness forbids to dwell, and more particularly as mainly affecting himself, such as the flow of blood from his nose, and two coagulated eyes, from the cellar-door, through a peculiar whim of looking for everything in a state of absolute obscurity. I may add, by way of incident, that Mr. Davis walks lame from a canine injury in the calf of his leg, which I hope will not prove rabid in the end, — but the animals he has on his own responsibility introduced on the premises, really resemble, begging your Ladyship's pardon for the expression, what are denominated D.'s incarnate.

Such, your Ladyship, is the unpropitious posture of domestic affairs at the Shrubbery, originating, I must say, exclusively from the unprecedented deviations of Mr. Davis. A mild construction would infer, from such extraordinary extravagance of conduct, a flightiness, or aberration of mind in the individual, but I deeply lament to say a more obvious cause exists to put a negative on such a surmise. For the last week Mr. Davis has betrayed an unusual propensity to pass his evenings at the George Tavern, and in consequence has several times exhibited himself in a Bacchanalian character to our extreme discomforture, and on one occasion actually trespassed so far beyond the bounds of modesty, as to offer me the rudeness of a salute. I blush to impart such details to your Ladyship; but justice demands an explicit statement, however repulsive to violated reserve and the rules of virtue. Amongst less immoral actions, I must advert to the arrival of two new engines with a vast number of leathern buckets, I fear ordered by Mr. Davis at my honored master's expense, and which are periodically exercised in pumping every day, by the gardeners and the hinds, being induced thereto by extra beverages of strong beer. By such means the aquatic supply of the well is frequently exhausted by playing upon nothing, — and at this present moment I am justified in stating we have not sufficient water to fulfil culinary purposes, or the demands of cleanliness. I feel ashamed to say there is not a strictly clean cap in the whole household.

In short, madam, we labor under an aggravated complica-

tion of insubordination, deprivation, discomfort, and alarm, daily and nightly, such as to shock my eyes whilst it grieves my heart, and I may almost say turns my head to be present at, without sufficient authority to dictate or power to enforce a course more consistent with the line of rectitude. As my sway does not extend to Mr. Davis, I humbly beseech your Ladyship's interference and influence in the proper quarter, in behalf, I may say, of a body of persecuted females, some of whom possess cultivated minds and sensitive feelings beyond their sphere.

I remain, respected Madam,
Your Ladyship's most obliged and very humble servant,
AMELIA PHIPPS.

P. S. — One of Mr. Davis's savage, bull-baiting dogs has just rushed with a frightful crash into the china-closet, in pursuit of the poor cat.

To Sir Jacob Jubb, Baronet, M. P.

HONNERD SUR,

Yure faver enclosin the Ruings of the Parlimint houses cam dully to hand, and did indeed put up all the hares on my hed. It cam like the bust of a thunder bolt. You mite hav nockt me down with the fether of a ginny ren. My bran swum. I seamed rooted to the hearth — and did not no weather I was a slip or a wack, on my hed or my heals. I was perfecly unconshunable, and could no more kollect meself then the Hirish tiths. I was a long Tim befor I cud perswade meself that the trooth was trew. But sich a dredful fire is enuff to unsettil wons resin. A thowsend ears mite role over our heds, and not prodeuce sich a blo to the constitushun. I was barley sensible. The Currier dropt from my hands wen I cam to the perrygraft witch says "Our hops are at an end. The Hous of Communs is a boddy of Flams, and so is the Hous of Pears! The Lords will be dun!"

Honnerd Sur, I beg to kondole as becums on yure missin yure seat. It must hav bean the suddinest of shox, & jest wen goin to sit after standin for the hole county, on yure hone futting, at your sole expens. But I do hop and trust it will not be yure dissolushun, as sum report; I do hop it is onely an

emty rummer pict up at sum publick Hous. At such an encindery crisus our wust frend wood be General Elixion, by stirrin up inflametory peple, particly if there was a long pole. You see, Sir Jacob, I konker in evvery sentashus sentemint in

GENERAL ELECTION.

yure respected Letter. The Volkano you menshun I can enter into. Theres a great deal of combustibul sperits in the country that onely wants a spark to convart them into cataraxt: — and I greave to say evvery inflammetory little demy Gog is nust, and has the caudle support of certin pappers. Im alludin to the Press. From this sort of countenins the nashunal aspec gits moor friteful evvery day. I see no prospex for the next gennerashun but rocking and swinging. I hav had a grate menny low thorts, for wat can be moor dispiritin then the loss of our two gratest Publick Housis! There is nothin cumfortable. There is a Vesuvus under our feat, and evvery step brings us nearer to its brinks. Evvery reflective man must say we are a virgin on a precipus.

Honnerd Sur! In the mean tim I hav pade atenshuns to

yure letter, and studid its epistlery derecshuns, witch I hav made meself very particler in fulfiling to the utmost xtent. If the most zellus effuts have not sucksedid to wish I humbly beg to blame but wat is dew may fall on me, and hope other peples shears will visit their hone heds. The axident with the spring gun was no neglex of mine. After Barnes settin it himself, his tumblin over the wier must be lade to his hone dore along with his shot legs. I sent for two surgings to sea to him, and they cauld in too moor, so that he is certin of a good dressin, but he was very down-harted about gitting a livin, till I tolled him yure honner wood settle on him for the rest of his days. I may say the lik of the other axident to Sanders and Sam, who got badly woundid wile wotchin the stax, by apprehendin won another after a sanguine conflic by mistake for incinderies. I have promist in yure honners nam to reword them boath hansumly for their vigilings, but they stedfistly refus to padrol anny moor after dusk, tho they ar agreble by daylit, which leavs me at my whits ends for Firegards, as strange men wood not be trusswurthy.

Honnerd Sur — I am sorry I cood not git the mad servents to set up for theaves, even for wun nite runnin. I tried the Currier on them, but it did n't wurk on there minds; they tuck lites in their hands and waukd to there pillers as if they had n't a car on there heds, and wen I insistid on their allarmin me they all give me warnin. As for the swetharts there 's a duzzen domesticatted luvers in the kitchen, and I 'm sorry to say I can't give them all a rowt. I ketchd the cook's bo gettin in at a winder, and sercht his pockets for feer of fosfrus, but he contaned nothin xcept a cruckid sixpens, a taler's thimbel, and a tin backy-box, with a lock of hare witch did not match with cook's. It is dangerus wurk. Becos I luck after the mades candels they tie strings to the banesters to ketch my fut, and I have twice pitcht from the hed to the fut of the stars. I am riting with my forrid brandid and brown pepperd, and my rite hand in a poltus from gropping in the dark for cumbustibils in the cole seller, and diskivering nothin but the torturous kat and her kittings.

Honnerd Sur — I got six capitol gees a bargin, but am verry dubbius weather they possess the propperty that ort to make them wakful and weary of nites. The old specious may be lost. The Roman gees you menshun wood certinly

hav nevver sufferd themselvs to be stolen without a cakeling, as our hone did too nites ago. As for the wotch dogs, to be candied, they were all errers in gudgment. There was to much Bul in the bread. The verry fust nite they were let lose they flew in a rag, and began to vent their caning propensites on each other's curcases. I regret to say too was wurrid to deth before the next mourning, and the rest were so

"TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE."

full of bad bits and ingeries in there vittles they were obligated to be kild. In shutting Seazer with the blunderbush, I lament to ad it hung fire, and in liftin it up it went off of its hone hed and shot the bucher's horse at the gait, and he has thretind to tak the law if he is n't made good, as he was verry vallyble.

Honnerd Sur — Accordin to orders I tuck Johnson the suspishus man evvery nite to the Gorge, and told him to caul for wat he likt, witch was allways an ot suppir and Punch. As yet he as diskivered nothin but sum lov nonsins about a deary-made, so that its uncertin weather he is a dillygate or not; but I shood say a desinin won, for by sum artful meens he allways manniged to make me drunk fust, and gennerally lent a hand to carry me home. I told the landlord to let him have aney thing he wantid and yure Honner wood pay the

skore, but I think it was unprudent of Mr. Tapper to let him run up to ten pound. But it is n't all drink, but eating as well — Johnson has a very glutinous appetit, and always stix to the tabel as long as there is meet.

Honnerd Sur — Last fridy morning there was grate riotism and sines of the populus risin, and accordin I lost no time in berryin the plait as derected by yure ordirs. I am gratifid to say the disturbans turned out onely a puggleistical fit; but owen to our hurry and allarm, the spot ware the plait was berrid went out of our heads. We have sinse dug up the hole srubbery, but without turnin up anny thing in its shape. But it cant be lost, tho' it isnt to be found. The gardner swares the srubs will all di from being transplanted at unpropper sesin — but I trust it is onely his old grumblin stile witch he cannot git over.

Honnerd Sur — The wust is to cum. In casis of Fire the trooth is shure to brake out suner or latter, so I may as well cum to the catstrophy without any varnish on my tail. This morning, according to yure order, I hignitted the littel faggit stak, fust takin the precawshuny meshure of drawin up a line of men with buckits, from the dux-pond to the sene of combusting. Nothin can lay therefor on my sholders: it all riz from the men striking for bear, wen they ort to hav bean handin warter to won another. I felt my deuty to argy the pint, which I trust will be apruved, and wile we were cussin and discussin the fire got a hed that defide all our unitted pours to subdo. To confess the fax, the fire inguns ware all lokt up in a stabble with a shy key that had lost itself the day before, and was not to be had wen we wantid to lay hands on it. Not that we could have wurkd the inguns if they had faverd with their presens, for want of hands. Evvery boddy had run so offen at the allarm bell that they got noboddy to go in there steed. It was an hawful site; the devowring ellemint swallerd won thing after another as sune as cotched, and rushed along roring with friteful violins. Were the finger of Providins is the hand as does we must not arrange it, but as the him says, "we must submit and humbel Bee." Heavin direx the winds, and not us. As it blue towards the sow the piggry sune cotchd, and that cotchd the foul housis, and then the barn cotchd with all the straw, and the granery cotched next, witch it wood not have dun if we had puld down the Cow Hous

that stud between. That was all the cotching, excep the hay-stax, from Jenkins runnin about with a flaimin tale to his smoak-frock. At last, by a blessin, when there was no moor to burn it was got under and squentched itself, prays be given without loss of lif or lim. Another comfit is all bein inshured in the Sun, enuff to kiver it; and I shud hop they will not refus to make gud on the ground that it was dun wilful by our hone ax and deeds. But fire officis are sumtimes verry unlibberal, and will ketch hold of a burning straw, and if fax were put on their oths I could n't deni a bundil of rags, matchis, candel ends, and other combustibils pokt into the faggits, and then litin up with my hone hand. Tim will sho. In the meenwile I am consienshusly eazy, it was dun for the best, though turnd out for the wust, and am gratifid to reflect that I hav omitted nothin, but have scruppleusly fulfild evvery particler of yure honner's instruxions, and in hap of approval of the saim, await the faver of furthir commands, and am,

Honnerd Sur Jacob,
Your humbel, faithful, and obedient Servint,
ROGER DAVIS.

LIGHT-FINGERED.

THE SUBLIME AND THE RIDICULOUS.

THE PARISH REVOLUTION.

"From the sublime to the ridiculous is but a step."

ALARMING NEWS FROM THE COUNTRY. — AWFUL INSURRECTION AT STOKE POGIS. — THE MILITARY CALLED OUT. — FLIGHT OF THE MAYOR.

WE are concerned to state that accounts were received in town at a late hour last night, of an alarming state of things at Stoke Pogis. Nothing private is yet made public; but report speaks of very serious occurrences. The number of killed is not known, as no despatches have been received.

Further Particulars.

Nothing is known yet; papers have been received down to the 4th of November, but they are not up to anything.

Further further Particulars. (*Private Letter.*)

It is scarcely possible for you, my dear Charles, to conceive the difficulties and anarchical manifestations of turbulence, which threaten and disturb your old birthplace, poor Stoke Pogis. To the reflecting mind, the circumstances which hourly transpire afford ample food for speculation and moral reasoning. To see the constituted authorities of a place, however mistaken or misguided by erring benevolence, plunging into a fearful struggle with an irritated, infuriated, and I may say, armed populace, is a sight which opens a field for terrified conjecture. I look around me with doubt, agitation, and dismay; because, whilst I venerate those to whom the sway of a part of a state may be said to be intrusted, I cannot but yield to the conviction that the abuse of power must be felt to be an overstep of authority in the best intentioned of the Magistracy. This even you will allow. Being on the spot, my dear Charles, an eyewitness of these fearful scenes, I feel how impossible it is for me to give you any idea of the prospects which surround me. To say that I think all will end well, is to trespass beyond the confines of hopes; but whilst I admit that there is strong ground for apprehending the worst, I cannot shut my eyes to the conviction that if firm measures, tempered with concession, be resorted to, it is far from being out of the pale of probability that serenity may be re-established. In hazarding this conclusion, however, you must not consider me as at all forgetting the responsibilities which attach to a decidedly formed opinion. O Charles! you who are in the quiet of London, can little dream of the conflicting elements which form the storm of this devoted village. I fear you will be wearied with all these details; but I thought at this distance, at which you are from me, you would wish me to run the risk of wearying you rather than omit any of the interesting circumstances. Let Edward read this; his heart, which I know beats for the Parish, will bleed for us.

I am, &c.
H. J. P.

P. S. — Nothing further has yet occurred, but you shall hear from me again to-morrow.

Another Account.

Symptoms of disunion have for some time past prevailed between the authorities of Stoke Pogis, and a part of the inhabitants. The *primum mobile*, or first mobbing, originated in an order of the Mayor's, that all tavern doors should shut at eleven. Many complied, and shut, but the door of the Rampant Lion openly resisted the order. A more recent notice has produced a new and more dangerous irritation on our too combustible population. A proclamation against Guy Fauxes and Fireworks was understood to be in preparation by command of the chief Magistrate. If his Worship had listened to the earnest and prudential advice of the rest of the bench, the obnoxious placard would not have been issued till the 6th, but he had it posted up on the 4th, and by his precipitation has plunged Stokes Pogis into a convulsion, that nothing but Time's soothing syrup can alleviate.

From another Quarter.

We are all here in the greatest alarm! a general rising of the inhabitants took place this morning, and they have continued in a disturbed state ever since. Everybody is in a bustle, and indicating some popular movement. Seditious cries are heard! the bell-man is going his rounds, and on repeating "God save the King!" is saluted with "Hang the crier!" Organized bands of boys are going about collecting sticks, &c., whether for barricades or bonfires is not known; many of them singing the famous Gunpowder Hymn, "Pray remember," &c. These are features that remind us of the most inflammable times. Several strangers of suspicious gentility arrived here last night, and privately engaged a barn; they are now busily distributing handbills amongst the crowd: surely some horrible tragedy is in preparation!

A later Account.

The alarm increases. Several families have taken flight

by the wagon, and the office of Mr. Stewart, the overseer, is besieged by persons desirous of being passed to their own parish. He seems embarrassed and irresolute, and returns evasive answers. The worst fears are entertaining.

Fresh Intelligence.

The cause of the overseer's hesitation has transpired. The pass-cart and horse have been lent to a tradesman, for a day's pleasure, and are not returned. Nothing can exceed the indignation of the paupers! they are all pouring towards the poor-house, headed by Timothy Gubbins, a desperate drunken character, but the idol of the Workhouse. The constables are retiring before this formidable body. The following notice is said to be posted up at the Town-Hall: "Stick no Bills."

Eleven o'clock.

The mob have proceeded to outrage — the poor poor-house has not a whole pane of glass in its whole frame! The Magistrates, with Mr. Higginbottom at their head, have agreed to call out the military; and he has sent word that he will come as soon as he has put on his uniform.

A terrific column of little boys has just run down the High street, it is said to see a fight at the Green Dragon. There is an immense crowd in the Market-Place. Some of the leading shopkeepers have had a conference with the Mayor, and the people are now being informed by a placard of the result. Gracious heaven! how opposite is it to the hopes of all moderate men — "The Mare is Hobstinate — He is at the Roes and Crown — But refuses to treat."

Twelve o'clock.

The military has arrived, and is placed under his own command. He has marched himself in a body to the market-place, and is now drawn up one deep in front of the Pound. The mob are in possession of the walls, and have chalked upon them the following proclamation: "Stokian Pogians be firm! stick up for bonfires! stand to your squibs!"

Quarter past Twelve.

Mr. Wigsby, the Master of the Free School, has declared on the side of liberty, and has obtained an audience of the

Mayor. He is to return in fifteen minutes for his Worship's decision.

Half past Twelve.

During the interval, the Mayor has sworn in two special constables, and will concede nothing. When the excitement of the mob was represented to him by Mr. Wigsby, he pointed to a truncheon on a table, and answered, "They may do their worsest." The exasperation is awful — the most frightful cries are uttered, "Huzza for Guys! Gubbins forever! and no Higginbottom!" The military has been ordered to clear the streets, but his lock is not flinty enough, and his gun refuses to fire on the people.

* * * * *

The Constables have just obtained a slight advantage; they made a charge altogether, and almost upset a Guy. On the left-hand side of the way they have been less successful; Mr. Huggins the beadle attempted to take possession of an important street post, but was repulsed by a boy with a cracker. At the same moment Mr. Blogg the churchwarden, was defeated in a desperate attempt to force a *passage* up a *court*.

One o'clock.

The military always dines at one, and has retreated to the Pig and Puncheon. There is a report that the head constable is taken with all his staff.

Two o'clock.

A flying watchman has just informed us that the police are victorious on all points, and the same has been confirmed by a retreating constable. He states that the Pound is full — Gubbins in the stocks, and Dobbs in the cage. That the whole mob would have been routed, but for a very corpulent man, who rallied them on running away.

Half past Three.

The check sustained by the mob proves to have been a reverse; the constables are the sufferers. The cage is chopped to fagots, we have n't a pound, and the stocks are rapidly falling. Mr. Wigsby has gone again to the Mayor with overtures, the people demand the release of Dobbs and Gubbins, and the demolition of the stocks, the pound, and the cage.

As these are already destroyed, and Gubbins and Dobbs are at large, it is confidently hoped by all moderate men that his Worship will accede to the terms.

GOOD ENTERTAINMENT FOR MAN AND HORSE.

Four o'clock.

The Mayor has rejected the terms. It is confidently affirmed that, after this decision, he secretly ordered a post-chaise, and has set off with a pair of post-horses as fast as they can't gallop. A meeting of the principal tradesmen has taken place, and the butcher, the baker, the grocer, the cheesemonger, and the publican, have agreed to compose a Provisional Government. In the mean time the mob are loud in their joy,—they are letting off squibs and crackers, and rockets, and devils in all directions, and quiet is completely restored.

We subjoin two documents,—one containing the articles drawn up by the Provisional Government and Mr. Wigsby; the other, the genuine narrative of a spectator.

DEAR CHARLES, —

The events of the last few hours, since I closed my minute narration, are pregnant with fate; and no words that I can utter on paper will give you an idea of their interest. Up to the hour at which I closed my sheet, anxiety regulated the movement of every watchful bosom; but since then, the approaches to tranquillity have met with barriers and interruptions. To the meditative mind, these popular paroxysms have their desolating deductions. O my Charles, I myself am almost sunk into an Agitator — so much do we take the color from the dye in which our reasoning faculties are steeped. I stop the press — yes, Charles — I stop the press of circumstances to say, that a dawn of the Pacific is gleaming over the Atlantic of our disturbances; and I am enabled, by the kindness of Constable Adams, to send you a Copy of the Preliminaries, which are pretty well agreed upon, and only wait to be ratified. I close my letter in haste. That peace may descend on the Olive Tree of Stoke Pogis, is the earnest prayer of, &c.

H. J. P.

P. S. — Show the Articles to Edward. He will, with his benevolence, at once see that they are indeed precious articles for Stoke Pogis.

CONDITIONS.

1. That for the future, widows in Stoke Pogis shall be allowed their thirds, and Novembers their fifths.
2. That the property of Guys shall be held inviolable, and their persons respected.
3. That no arson be allowed, but all bonfires shall be burnt by the common hangman.
4. That every rocket shall be allowed an hour to leave the place.
5. That the freedom of Stoke Pogis be presented to Madame Hengler, in a cartridge-box.
6. That the military shall not be called out uncalled for.
7. That the parish beadle, for the time being, be authorized to stand no nonsense.
8. That his Majesty's mail be permitted to pass on the night in question.

9. That all animosities be buried in oblivion, at the Parish expense.

10. That the ashes of old bonfires be never raked up.

(*Signed*) { WAGSTAFF, High Constable. WIGSBY.

The Narrowtiv of a High Whitness who seed every Think proceed out of a Back-winder up Fore Pears to Mrs. Humphris.

O Mrs. Humphris! Littel did I Dram, at my Tim of Life, to see Wat is before me. The hole Parrish is Throne into a pannikin! The Revelations has reeched Stock Poggis — and the people is riz agin the Kings rain, and all the Pours that be. All this Blessed Mourning Mrs. Griggs and Me as bean siting abscondingly at the tiptop of the Hows crying for lowness. We have lockd our too selves in the back Attical Rome, and nothing can come up to our Hanksiety. Some say it is like the Frentch Plot — sum say sum thing moor arter the Dutch Patten is on the car-pit, and if so we shall be flored like Brussels. Well, I never did like them Brown holland brum gals!

Our Winder overlooks all the High Street, xcept jest ware Mister Higgins jutts out Behind. What a prospectus! — All riotism and hubbub. — There is a lowd speechifying round the Gabble end of the Hows. The Mare is arranging the Populous from one of his own long winders. — Poor Man! — for all his fine goold Cheer, who wood Sit in his shews!

I hobserve Mr. Tuder's bauld Hed uncommon hactiv in the Mobb, and so is Mister Waggstaff the Constable, considdering his rummatiz has only left one Harm disaffected to shew his loyalness with. He and his men air staving the mobb's Heds to make them Suppurate. They are trying to Custardise the Ringleders But as yet hav Captivated Noboddy. There is no end to accidence. Three unsensible boddis are Carrion over the way on Three Cheers, but weather Naybers or Gyes, is dubbious. Master Gollop too, is jest gon By on one of his Ants Shuters, with a Bunch of exploded Squibs gone off in his Trowsirs. It makes Mrs. G. and Me tremble like Axle trees, for our Hone nevvies. Wile we ware at the open Winder they sliped out. With sich Broils in the Street who nose what Scraps they may git into. Mister J. is gon

off with his muskitry to militate agin the mobb; and I fear without anny Sand Witches in his Cartrich Box. Mrs. Griggs is in the Sum state of Singularity as meself. Onely think, Mrs. H. of two Loan Wiming looken Down on such a Heifervescence, and as Hignorant as the unbiggotted Babe of the state of our Husbandry! to had to our Convexity, the Botcher has not Bean. No moor as the Backer and We shold here Nothing if Mister Higgins hand n't hollowed up Fore Storys. What news he brakes! That wicked Wigsby as reffused to Reed the Riot Ax, and the Town Clark is no Schollard! Is n't that a bad Herring!

O Mrs. Humphris! It is unpossible to throe ones hies from one End of Stock Poggis to the other, without grate Pane. Nothing is seed but Wivs asking for Huzbinds — nothing is heard but childerin looking for Farthers. Mr. Hatband the Undertacker as jist bean squibed and obligated for safeness to inter his own Hows. Mrs. Higgins blames the unflexable Stubbleness of the Mare and says a littel timely Concussion wood have been of Preventive Servis. Haven nose! For my Part I dont believe all the Concussion on Hearth wood hav prevented the Regolater bein scarified by a Squib and runnin agin the Rockit — or that it could unshatter Pore Master Gollop, or squentch Wider Welshis rix of Haze witch is now Flamming and smocking in two volumes. The ingins as been, but could not Play for want of Pips witch is too often the Case with Parrish inginuity. Wile affares are in this friteful Posturs, thank Haven I have one grate comfit. Mr. J. is cum back on his legs from Twelve to won tired in the extreams with Being a Standing Army, and his Uniformity spatterdashed all over. He says his hone saving was onely thro leaving His retrenchments.

Pore Mr. Griggs has cum In after his Wif in a state of grate exaggeration. He says the Boys hav maid a Bone Fire of his garden fence and Pales upon Pales cant put it out. Severil Shells of a bombastic nater as been picked up in his Back Yard and the old Cro's nest as bean Perpetrated rite thro by a Rockit. We hav sent out the Def Shopmun to here wat he can and he says their is so Manny Crackers going he dont no witch report to Belive, but the Fishmongerers has Cotchd and with all his Stock compleatly Guttid. The Brazers next Dore is lickwise in Hashes, —

but it is hopped he has assurance enuf to cover him All over. They say nothing can save the Dwellins adjourning. O Mrs. H. how greatful ought J and I to bee that our hone Premiss and propperty is next to nothing! The effex of the lit on Bildings is marvulous. The Turrit of St. Magnum Bonum is quit clear and you can tell wat Time it is by the Clock verry planely only it stands!

The noise is enuf to Drive won deleterious! Too Specious Conestabbles is persewing littel Tidmash down the Hi Street and Sho grate fermness, but I trembel for the Pelisse. Peple drops in with New News every Momentum. Sum say All is Lost — and the town Criar is missin. Mrs. Griggs is quite retched at herein five littel Boys is throwd off a spirituous Cob among the Catherend Weals. But I hope it wants cobbobboration. Another Yuth its sed has had his hics Blasted by sum blowd Gun Powder. You Mrs. H. are Patrimonial, and may supose how these flying rummers Upsetts a Mothers Sperrits.

O Mrs. Humphris how I envy you that is not tossing on the ragging bellows of these Flatulent Times, but living under a Mild Dispotic Govinment in such Sequestrated spots as Lonnon and Padington. May you never go thro such Transubstantiation as I have bean riting in! Things that stood for Sentries as bean removed in a Minuet — and the verry effigis of wat was venerablest is now burning in Bone Fires. The Worshipfull chaar is emty. The Mare as gon off clandesting with a pare of Hossis, and without his diner. They say he complanes that his Corporation did not stik to him as it shold have dun But went over to the other Side. Pore Sole — in sich a case I dont wunder he lost his stommich. Yisterday he was at the summut of Pour. Them that hours ago ware enjoying parrish officiousness as been turnd out of there Dignittis! Mr. Barbey says in futer all the Perakial Authoritis will be Wigs.

Pray let me no wat his Magisty and the Prim Minestir think of Stock Poggis's Constitution, and believe me conclusively my deer Mrs. Humphris most frendly and trully.

BRIDGET JONES.

ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

"Charlatan is rising in public favor, and has many *backers* who *book* him to win." — *Sporting Intelligence.*

Of all the signs of the times — considering them literally as *signs*, and the public literally as "a *public*" — there are none more remarkable than the Hahnemann's Head, — the Crown and Compasses, devoted to Gall and Spurzheim's entire, — and the Cock and Bull, that hangs out at the House of Call for Animal Magnetizers. The last concern, especially — a daring, glaring, flaring, gin-palace-like establishment — is a moral phenomenon. That a tap dispensing a raw, heady, very unrectified article, should obtain any custom whatever, in reputed genteel and well-lighted neighborhood, seems quite

impossible; yet such is the incomprehensible fact; — respectable parties, scientific men, and even physicians, in good practice in all other respects, have notoriously frequented the bar, from which they have issued again, walking all sorts of ways at once, or more frequently falling asleep on the steps, but still talking such "rambling skimble-skamble stuff" as would naturally be suggested by incoherent visions of a drunken man. Such exhibitions, however, are comparatively rare in London, to their occurrence in Paris, which city has always taken the lead of our own capital in matters of novelty. It is asserted by a good authority that at a French concern, in the same line, no less than seventy-eight "medical men, and sixty-three other very intelligent individuals," became thoroughly muzzy and mistified, and so completely lost all "*clairvoyance*" of their own that they applied to an individual to read a book and a letter to them; to tell them the hour on their own watches; to mention the pips on the cards; and, by way of putting the state of their "intuitive foresight" beyond question, they actually appealed to the *backsight* of a man who was sound asleep! A bout on so large a scale has not been attempted, hitherto, in the English metropolis; but as all fashions transplanted from Paris flourish vigorously in our soil, it is not improbable that we may yet see a meeting of the College of Physicians rendered very how-come-you-so indeed by an excess of Mesmer's "particular." The influence of such an example could not fail to have a powerful influence on all classes; and a pernicious narcotic would come into general use; the notorious effect of which is to undermine the reason of its votaries, and rob them of their common senses. To avert such a national evil, surely demands the timely efforts of our philanthropists; and, above all, of those persons who have set their faces against the Old Tom — not of Lincoln, but of London — and in their zeal for the public sobriety, aim at even converting the brewers' kilderkins into pumpkins. — Seriously, might not the Temperance Societies extend the sphere of their operations, by a whole hemisphere, and perhaps with equal advantage to mankind, by attacking mental dram-drinking, as well as the bodily tippling of ardent spirits? The bewildered rollings, reelings, and idiotic effusions of mere animal drunkenness can hardly be more degrading to rational human beings, than the crazy toddlings and

twaddlings of a bemused mind, whether only maudlin with infinitesimal doses of quackery, or rampant to mad staggers with the *lush*ious compounds and Devil's Elixirs of the Mesmerian Distillery. Take the wildest freaks of the most fuddled, muddled, bepuddled soaker, — such as "trying to light his pipe at a pump," — attempting to wind up a plug with his watch-key, — or requesting, from a damp bed in the gutter, to be tucked in, — and are they a bit, or a whit, or a jot, or a what-not, more absurd, more extravagant, or more indicative of imbecility of reason, than the vagary of a somnambulist, gravely going through the back-gammon of reading Back's Journal, or a back-number of the Retrospective Review, through the back of his head?

In case the great Water Companies alluded to should think proper to adopt the foregoing suggestions, the following genuine letters are placed very much at their service, as materials to be worked up into tracts: —

(Copy.)

To Mr. Robert Holland, Linen-Draper, No. 194 *Tottenham Court Road, London.*

Dear Bob, —

Hoping you are well, and well-doing, we have heard such wonderful accounts in our parts lately about animal magnetizing, without any clear notion what it is.

My own notion is, it must be something new of my Lord Spenser's — Althorp as was — who was always very curious about his beasts.

Others do say the Duke of Bedford, with a fresh cattle-show — nobody knows.

Now you are just at the fountain-head to learn, and as most of us down here is more or less engaged in breeding stock, it would be a main thing to be put up to the secret at its first start.

Also whether it is expensive to buy — and who found it out — and if likely to do away with oil-cake and mangel-wurzel, and such like particulars.

Praise be blest, we are all stout and hearty, except your

poor aunt, who died three year ago. Which is all the news at present form,

Dear Bob,
Your loving Uncle,
REUBEN OXENHAM.

(COPY.)

To Mr. Reuben Oxenham, Grazier, Grasslands, near Lincolnshire.

DEAR UNCLE, —

I was agreeably surprised by your breaking silence; for I had made up my mind you was a distrest farmer gone off swan hopping (excuse the joke) to Swan River, or to get settled among the Dutch boars and lions at the Cape of Good Hope. Thank heaven such is not the case; though damped with my dear aunt's going off. I little thought, poor soul! the why and wherefore my goose three Christmases ago was the last! But we must all be cut off some day or other, which is a religious consolation for the remnants that are left behind.

I have examined, as you desired, a sample of animal magnetism; which turns out to be the reverse of everything you expect. Indeed such might have been anticipated by a little forethought on the subject. There is nothing to describe about animals to such as you, that deal in them of all qualities; but it is quite likely that you have forgot all about magnets, since the days of your youth. But perhaps, when they are named to you, your memory may serve to recollect little bone boxes, at sixpence apiece, with a blackamoor's head atop, and a little bar of philosopher's steel inside, that points out the north, and sets a needle dancing like mad. It likewise picks up emery, and sticks fast to the blade of a knife. But that is all its powers are competent to — and of course on too small a scale to have any dancing, or lifting, or sticking effect on objects so big as bullocks, or even a pig, or a sheep. Accordingly you will not be surprised to hear that animal magnetism has nothing at all to do with beasts or loadstones either; but is all of a piece with juggling, quack-salving, and mountebanking, such as universal physic, spitting

Coventry ribbons, tumbling, and posturing, thimble-rig, and the like fabrics. One of the principal tricks is sending people off to sleep against their wills; not so new a trick though, but it has been heard of years and years ago at Bow Street; and easy enough to perform, any day, with a pint of porter, — provided one was rogue enough to want to hocus-pocus the money out of other people's pockets into one's own. To come to the point, there 's an outlandish Count set up in it at the west end; and no doubt will realize a fortune. He has his carriage-people for customers, as well as Howel and James; indeed, I have heard of the Somebodies as well as Nobodies running after common fortune-tellers' tales, and not too high to be above going up into their back-garrets. Some say he is a Frenchman, others say a German; but the last for choice, for he smokes enough to drive all the rats out of the neighborhood. Besides, the Germans, I 'm told, will believe anything, provided it 's impossible; which is some excuse for their wanting other people to give the same long credits; and besides, Germans as well as French, and indeed all other foreigners, for that matter, though ever such honest people in the main; yet when they *do* turn rogues at English expense, they invariably go more than the whole hog, namely, boar, sow, sucking-pigs and all. So I determined to go wide-awake, and to keep my eyes open, too, by not taking bit or sup in the house, if offered ever so politely. It is surely not showing disrespect to hospitality, to object to hocussed victuals and drinks. I might have spared my fears, however; for there was nothing provided but the ledgerdemain, &c., and that was charged a guinea for, which you can repay at convenience. I preferred to see somebody else conjured before me; so another patient was taken first. She was a fine strapping young woman enough, dressed half and half between a fine lady and a servant-maid; but as sly-looking a baggage as you could select from an assortment of gypseys; and unless her face belied her, quite capable of scratching a Cock Lane ghost. Indeed something came across me that I had seen her before; and if memory don't deceive, it was at some private theatricals contrary to law. For certain she could keep her countenance; for if the outlandish figure of a doctor, with his queer faces, had postured, and pawed, and poked towards *me*, with his fingers, for all the world like the old game of "My grand-

mother sends you a staff, and you 're neither to smile nor to laugh," as he did to her, I should have bursted, to a dead certainty; instead of going off, as she did, into an easy sleep. As soon as she was sound, the Count turned round to me and the company with his broken English — "Ladies and gentlemens," says he, "look here at dis yoong maidens, Mizz Charlot Ann Elizabet Martin" — for that is his way of talking. "Wid my magnetismuses I tro her into von state of sombamboozleism" — or something to that effect. "Mizz Charlot Ann, dou art a slip." "As fast as a church, Mister Count," says she, talking and hearing as easy as broad awake. "Ferry goot," says he. "Now I take dis boke, — Missis Glasse Cokery, — and I shall make de maidens read som little of him wid her back. Dere he is bytween her sholders. Mizz Charlot Ann what you see now mit your eyes turned de wrong way for to look?" "Why, then," says she, "Mr. Count, I see quite plain a T and an O. Then comes R, and O, and S, and T — and the next word is H, and A, and I, and R." "Ferry goot," cries the Count over again. "Dat is to rost de hare. Ladies and gentlemens, you all here? As Gott is my shudge, so is here in de boke. Now den, Mizz Charlot Ann, vons more. Vot you test in your mouse?" "Why then, Master," says Charlotte Ann, "as sure as fate, I taste sweet herbs chopped up small!" "Ferry goot indeed! — bot what mor by sides de sweet herrubs?" "Why," says she, "it 's a relish of salt, and pepper, and mace, — and, let me see — there 's a flaivour of currant jelly." "Besser and besser!" cries the Count. "Ladies and gentlemens, are not dese voonderfools? You shall see every wart of it in de print. Mizz Charlot Ann, vot you feel now?" "Lawk a mercy, Mister Count," says she, "there 's a sort of stuffy feel, so there is, in my inside!" "Yaw! like van fool belly! Ferry goot! Now you feel vot?" "Feel! Mister Count?" says she — "why I don't feel nothing at all — the stuffiness is gone clean away!" "Yaw, my shild!" says he. "Dat is by cause I take avay de cokery boke from your two sholders. Ladies and gentlemens, dese is grand powers of magnetismus! Ach himmel! As Hamlet say, dere is more in our philosofies dan dere is in de heaven or de earth! Our mutter Nature is so fond to hide her face! Bot von adept, so as me, can lift up a whale!"

To shorten a long story, the sombamboozleism lasted for two hours; while Miss Charlot Ann told fortunes in her sleep, and named people's inward complaints, and prescribed for them with her eyes shut. Mine was dropsy; and I was to take antimonious wine three times a day, to throw the water off my stomach. So, if you like to ask your apothecary, or the parish doctor, they will be able to tell you whether it looks like proper practice or the reverse. For my own part, I mean to suspend myself till I feel more symptoms; and in the mean time I have experimented on myself so far as to try behind my back with the Ready Reckoner. But I could not even see the book, much less make out a figure. To be sure I was broad awake, but it stands to reason that the circumstance only gave the better chance in its favor — at least it has always been reckoned so with a book held the proper natural way. I was the more particular with the book-work, because it looked like the master-key to let you into the whole house: — for no doubt, if you can do *that* trick, you can do all the rest, and have a hare dressed between your shoulders as easily as a blister. But to my mind it is all sham Abraham; or the little boys that go every day with whole satchels full of books at their backs would know rather more about them than they do generally at leaving off school.

And now, Uncle, I have explained to you all about Animal Magnetism; and, says you, there are many things that come by names they have no right to, without going to Scotland, where you know they call a pitcher a pig. So it is very lucky, on the whole, that you wrote to me, instead of posting up to London on a fool's errand, — as did a respectable Lancashire grazing gentleman, the other day, in the newspapers, who was hoaxed all the way up to town, by a false notion that Animal Magnifying, as he called it, was some new, cheap, and quick way of fatting cattle. It will maybe turn out quite as deceitful an article as to its other qualities; and in that case, if I had the luck to be a magistrate, I would cold-pig the sleeping partners with Cold Bath Fields, and send off the active ones, to take a walk at a cart's tail, with something they could feel, if they could not read it, on their backs and shoulders. That's how I would measure out the law, if I was Lord Chief Justice. In which sentiments I conclude, with love to yourself, and all my cousins, if I have any living — with my best condolences

for my poor late Aunt. As to business, I have only broken twice as yet; which is doing pretty well, considering the hard times and the state of trade. Wishing you the like prosperity, with health and every other blessing, I remain, dear Uncle,

Your affectionate nephew,
ROBERT HOLLAND.

P. S. Since the foregoing, I have discussed the subject with a neighbor, a Veterany Surgeon; and he says it is all very well for the old men and women Physicians, but won't go down with the Horse Doctors. "However," says he, "if you are bent on trying it, I will give you a receipt. Take a two-year old full blood colt, half broke, or not broke at all — if vicious, so much the better. Shoe him behind with a couple of stout horseshoe-loadstones, and then stand convenient, and take a tug or two at his tail, till you feel him begin to operate. That's Animal Magnetism, and will do you quite as much good or harm as the other new kick, and save you all the fees besides."

SOMNAMBULISM.

HINTS TO THE HORTICULTURAL.

It is always dangerous — as landsmen experience when they advise seamen — for a mere theorist to offer suggestions to practical men. It is quite as perilous — as bachelors discover in counselling mothers — for the simple speculator to volunteer advice to practical women; and, therefore, it must be doubly hazardous for one not even a tyro to throw out hints to practical persons of both sexes, as in the present case. Indeed, I almost blush like a "scarlet likeness" of myself, while recollecting my very slender claims on their attention. If the usual qualification of a horticulturist — a plant bearing his patronymic — were to be called for, I could not produce a sprout or a sprig indebted to my sponsorship. To say nothing of such "lofty growths" as *my* Queen Margaret, *my* Princess of Orange, or *my* Duke of Nassau, the British Flora never heard of so much as *my* Chickweed, *my* Grundsel, or *my* Dandelion. I never cultivated a common Daisy; and for any budding or blossoming desert on my part, a black "ball of earth" would justly exclude me from even a Candy-Tuft Club.

It is venturing, then, on a soil to which I am neither indigenous nor adapted; nevertheless, at the risk of being called a "straggler," I will venture to bring forward a few plain rules, founded on personal observation and study, and directed to points hitherto not touched upon, from the voluminous encyclopædias down to the dwarf works on Botany. They are addressed especially to those humble practitioners who garden without gardens, and play at the Floral Games without the costly appendages of greenhouses; the Conservatives, so to speak, without conservatories. Many hundreds of such amateurs exist in London and the suburbs; particularly females, who, disdaining the resource of Covent Garden, as well as the supply of the itinerant posy-people, indulge in the innocent ambition of growing their own geraniums, stocks, and mignonette. Hitherto, however, they have proceeded

on desultory principles; and it is with a view of inducing them to adopt a more scientific method, and proceed by fixed

BOTANIZING — A BOG PLANT.

rules, that I present to their notice a few hints derived from my ambulatory Note-Book.

The technical terms, as well as the phrases marked as quotations, are borrowed from the only herbaceous volume in my library, — "Paxton's Magazine of Botany."

Rule the First.

To produce a "Blow" from Plants at any Season of the Year.

Select a lofty house, in the most airy situation you can find — the corner of a street to be preferred. Any month in the calendar will do; but the best time is towards Lady Day or Michaelmas; that is to say, about the Equinox. The higher the windows are from the earth the better: your plants cannot have too much air. Avoid, however, all iron bars, wooden

rails, strings, or other contrivances, which only tend to cramp and confine the pots, and impede the blowing. As to plants, the "hard woody sorts" are reckoned to "strike best and strongest;" — they must be potted, in large-sized pots, and particularly well sticked. Keep them in the room, but not too near the fire, and water occasionally, till a favorable opportunity offers for their exposure to the fresh air, which cannot be too fresh. In winter, a wind from the north, or northeast, and in summer, from the south, or southwest, is generally found to answer the purpose; but the quarter is indifferent, provided the current of air is brisk enough.

Now put out your plants, so as to receive the full benefit of the breeze; and in a short time you may expect a blow which will sometimes come to such a pitch that your plants will excite the attention and astonishment of the passengers in the street. Some persons, of course, will be more struck than others by the beauty or size of your plants; and in such cases it is usual to make a distribution of offsets and specimens to the public. A liberal amateur, indeed, will not grudge to see a few ladies and gentlemen making off with pipings, and cuttings. N. B. "The plants need not be taken in at night."

Rule the Second.

To destroy Vermin in the most effectual Manner.

One of the great objects of the Florist ought to be to cleanse his plants thoroughly from blights, animalculæ, &c., in such a manner as to avoid all chance of *re-infection*. For this purpose, the best situation is a first-floor in a well-frequented street; — a balcony will be of the utmost advantage, as not only affording a stage for the exhibition of the more beautiful plants, but also every possible convenience for the object in view.

Now take an infected plant, and carefully pick off all slugs, May-bugs, snails, caterpillars, grubs, wood-lice, spiders, centipedes, cuckoo-spits, earwigs, or other vermin, preparatory to casting them into the street. In this latter particular consists the difficulty, as well as advantage, of the mode proposed. There are two points to observe: firstly, to seize the proper moment when some passenger, or passengers, shall be passing

below; and, secondly, to cast your slugs, May-bugs, snails, caterpillars, grubs, wood-lice, spiders, centipedes, cuckoo-spits, earwigs, and other nasty insects, with such a nicety, that they shall alight upon the hats, bonnets, tippets, shawls, capes, cloaks, pelisses, great-coats, gowns, muffs, &c., &c., of the party, or parties, beneath. Above all, the opportunities afforded by milk-pails, porter-pots, beer-cans, bakers' baskets, butchers' trays, &c., must not be neglected — as insuring the effectual destruction or absorption of the obnoxious animalculæ. A little daily practice will give the dexterity required. Some persons advise the operation to be performed in wet weather, as thereby the slugs, May-bugs, snails, caterpillars, grubs, wood-lice, spiders, centipedes, cuckoo-spits, and other nasty insects, will be more likely to adhere to the hats, bonnets, tippets, shawls, capes, cloaks, pelisses, great-coats, gowns, muffs, &c., &c., of the persons on whom they are conferred. Either way, the beneficial tendency of the plan will be obvious, on reflecting that the troublesome animalculæ, &c., are thus most probably carried off to distant private houses, lodging-houses, counting-houses, receiving-houses, wholesale houses, public-houses, eating-houses, green-houses, or the Houses of Parliament, so as to provide against the insects returning to the place from whence they came. The mode will be found peculiarly grateful to those persons whose extreme sensibility revolts at the deprivation of life, even amongst the minute tribes in question.

Rule the Third.

To water Plants so that none of the Moisture may be wasted or lost.

The same situations as above recommended will be proper in this case; except that where there is no balcony, an area must be dispensed with. A plentiful supply of water is the grand desideratum: if not laid on in the house, it will be advisable to remove to the neighborhood of a public pump. For plants — prefer Hydrangeas. "Persons who have plants in rooms, most generally injure them with too much water, in which respect the Hydrangea is very accommodating, it requiring a good supply." Choose a fine day. The best implement is a watering-pot, with the rose off, but you may use any jug, mug, or pitcher, with a good pour, provided it is

large enough to hold at least two quarts of fluid. The most careful hand, however, with the best implement, is apt to spill in watering, by overshooting or undershooting the mark; or in cases of mental abstraction, by aiming at quite a different object. Shortsighted persons have even been known to mis-

"POUR MARY ANNE!"

take artificial flowers for the real. In all such instances, particularly in dry seasons, or neighborhoods ill supplied, it becomes a public duty to provide that all such extra spirts, squirts, spouts, gushes, splashes, jets, souses, and even the very drippings and dribbles, shall be received in quarters that will be duly sensible of the benefit. "Nothing adds more to the charms of Horticulture, than that amenity, or kindly feeling which inculcates the importance of a liberal participation of one another's superfluities." Such superfluities will particularly be apt to arise when plants are troubled with insects,

to remove which a certain dashing style of watering is necessary, approaching to what is vulgarly termed "slushing," or "sloshing," or "slowsing" or "squashing," and from which a very considerable superabundance will always accrue. A liberal economy will dictate, therefore, to perform the act only at such moments, and in such directions, as will be sure to bestow the excess of fluid on proper objects. Thus, supposing the plant under treatment to be a large Hydrangea, it may be quite possible, while directing a sufficient stream on its head, to perform the same office, with the over-abundant fluid, on "Taylor's Glory" or "London Pride." The following varieties, all common to the metropolis, may also be expected to participate, viz. Runners, Creepers, and "Stove-Climbers," of different kinds — Cockscombs, Narcissus, Adonis, Maidens' Hair, Painted Ladies, Columbines, Turk's Caps, "Natives of the North of Europe," Sun-Flowers, Old Man, Pinks, Honesty, Thrift, the Sensitives, the Fly-Catchers, Major Convolvulus, and Virginia Stock.

N. B. Hot-Water, Tar-Water, Lime-Water, Infusions of Tobacco, and other medicated waters, may be used with equal, or even greater advantage to the health of the plants. The Syringe may be used occasionally for a change.

POT-LUCK.

AN INTERCEPTED DESPATCH.

THERE is no subject more deplored in polite circles than the notorious rudeness of what is called *Civil* war. Suavity, it must be confessed, has little to do with its sharp practice; but of course the adjective was prefixed ironically; or intended only to refer to that spurious kind of civility which is professed in domestic feuds, when "my dear" is equivalent to "my devil."

It is a question, however, worthy of an enlightened age, whether Civil War might not be literally civilized, and carried on with a characteristic courtesy. Lumps, thanks to the sugar-bakers, have been refined — and why not blows?

Intestinal strife, as at present waged, is a frightful anomaly. It runs counter to every association — moral or anatomical. A well-regulated mind must be unable to connect the idea of polite hostilities, with an unmannerly soldiery. It is difficult, for instance, to conceive an Urban Guard devoid of urbanity.

A civil war, to deserve the name and satisfy the Fancy, must have for Commander in Chief, on either side, a finished Gentleman — if of the Old School, the better — as devoted to the *suaviter in modo*, as to the *fortiter in re*. With a punctilious sense of the bland nature of the strife he is engaged in, he will make politeness the order of the day. The password will be "Sir Charles Grandison;" and should he feel compelled to publicly deliver his sentiments, he will make a genteel address do duty for an offensive manifesto. Every officer under him will rank for complaisance and amenity with a Master of the Ceremonies. His dragoons, with their best behaviors, will be mounted on well-bred horses: his cuirassiers as polished as their corslets, and as finely tempered as their swords. His infantry, all regulars, will adhere to the standards of propriety, as well as to the regimental colors: the

artillery will adopt the tone of good society, — and the band will play the agreeable.

THE SEAT OF WAR.

To prove that such a prospect is not altogether Utopian, I am happily enabled to make public the following letter, which develops at least the germ of a new system, that may hereafter make Civil War no more a misnomer than Polite Literature. It is dated from Castille *Senior*, and addressed to a public Functionary at Madrid.

(*Copy.*)

"YOUR EXCELLENCY, —

"I had the honor of describing in my last despatch, a little personal rencontre with the gallant general on the other side; and I have now the pleasure of laying before you the agreeable result of another affair, of the same nature.

"Early on the 19th instant, our picquets, with a becoming deference to their superiors, retired from the presence of a

large body of cavalry, and intimated that I might shortly expect the favor of a visit. I immediately sent the light dragoons and lancers to the front, with instructions to give the gentlemen on horseback a hearty welcome, and provide as they best could for their entertainment, till I should be prepared for their reception, as well as of any friends they might bring with them. I flattered myself, indeed, that I should enjoy the company of their whole army, and they were so good as not to disappoint me. A lively cannonade quickly announced their approach by a salute which was cordially returned from the whole of our batteries; and then a cloud of skirmishers pushed forward to our front, and commenced a liberal exchange of compliments with our tirailleurs. Our cavalry in the mean time had sought an introduction to their horse, which was met in the handsomest manner, and many intimacies were formed that only ended with life. The cavalry at length retired, but evidently with regret, and many reiterated promises of soon coming again.

"Their main body now appeared moving in the best disposition towards us; whilst the rifles on the flanks paid the most marked attention to our officers, who received many substantial tokens of their regard. A closer acquaintance was now sought with an empressment quite flattering; indeed, it was difficult to reply in adequate terms to the warmth and importunity of their offers. Perceiving that we had some very heavy guns on our right, they obligingly undertook to carry them; professing at the same time a very sincere inclination to serve our light artillery. They also wished to take charge of a hill on the left that might annoy us; but had the courtesy to resign it to Colonel Bower, on a representation that the eminence was indispensable to his views. Their cavalry also endeavored gallantly to make a favorable impression on us; and in particular evinced a lively desire to visit some of our squares; but which, on the plea of inconvenience, we found means to decline. There had manifestly been a design of dropping in upon us unprepared, but fortunately I was enabled to foil the pleasantry, and even to turn the tables upon themselves. The enemy finally gave up every point, and handsomely offered to accommodate us with the field of battle; but feeling bound in politeness to return the visit, I ordered an advance of the whole line; and we were at once hospitably permitted to enter their lines without ceremony, and make

ourselves at home in their camp. In justice to their generosity I must not omit to state that we found it abundantly provisioned — the artillery entirely placed at our command — the whole baggage devoted to our use, and even the military chest left very much at our service.

"The list of casualties is not yet made up — but I am in possession of some of the details. The 19th was politely invited to a masked battery, and a succession of balls, kept up with a spirit that the regiment, and Major Smith in particular, will long remember. Cornet Bower is deeply indebted to a lancer, who helped him off his horse; and Captain Curtis is lying under a similar obligation in the hospital. Captain Flint owes the cure of his asthma to the skill of a carbineer; and Lieutenant Power was favored with as specific a remedy for determination of blood to the head. Colonel Boult was handsomely presented with the freedom of the field, enclosed in a shell; and Major Brooke is absent, having received a pressing invitation that he could not well resist — to visit the enemy's quarters.

"I have the honor to be, &c., &c., &c.

(Signed) MANNERS.

(Countersigned) CHESTERFIELD."

THE ARMY, WITH THREE TIMES THREE.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PAPERS.

"MIRTH, ADMIT ME OF THY CREW."

[FRONTISPIECE, BY HARVEY, TO COMIC ANNUAL OF 1833.]

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PAPERS.

PREFACES TO THE WHIMS AND ODDITIES.

FIRST SERIES.

"Cicero! Cicero! if to pun be a crime, 't is a crime I have learned of thee. Bias! Bias! if to pun be a crime, by thy example I was biassed."

SCRIBLERUS.

DEDICATION, TO THE REVIEWERS.

What is a modern Poet's fate?
To write his thoughts upon a slate;—
The Critic spits on what is done,—
Gives it a wipe,—and all is gone.

In presenting his Whims and Oddities to the Public, the Author desires to say a few words, which he hopes will not swell into a Memoir.

It happens to most persons, in occasional lively moments, to have their little chirping fancies and brain-crotchets, that skip out of the ordinary meadow-land of the mind. The Author has caught *his*, and clapped them up in paper and print, like grasshoppers in a cage. The judicious reader will look upon the trifling creatures accordingly, and not expect from them the flights of poetical winged horses.

At a future time, the Press may be troubled with some things of a more serious tone and purpose, — which the Author has resolved upon publishing, in despite of the advice of certain critical friends. His forte, they are pleased to say, is decidedly humorous; but a gentleman cannot always be breathing his comic vein.

It will be seen, from the illustrations of the present work, that the Inventor is no artist; — in fact, he was never "meant to draw" — any more than the tape-tied curtains mentioned by Mr. Pope. Those who look at his designs, with Ovid's Love of Art, will therefore be disappointed; — his sketches are as rude and artless to other sketches, as Ingram's rustic manufacture to the polished chair. The designer is quite aware of their defects; but when Raphael has bestowed seven odd legs upon four Apostles, and Fuseli has stuck in a great goggle-head without an owner; — when Michael Angelo has set on a foot the wrong way, and Hogarth has painted in

defiance of all the laws of nature and perspective, he does hope that his own little enormities may be forgiven — that his sketches may look interesting, like Lord Byron's Sleeper, — "with all their errors."

Such as they are, the Author resigns his pen-and-ink fancies to the public eye. He has more designs in the wood; and if the present sample should be relished, he will cut more, and come again, according to the proverb, with a New Series.*

ADDRESS TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first edition of Whims and Oddities being exhausted, I am called forward by an importunate publisher to make my best bow, and a new address to a discerning and indulgent public. Unaffectedly flattered by those who have bought this little work, and still more bound to those who have bound it, I adopt the usual attitude of a Thanksgiver, but with more than the usual sincerity. Though my head is in Cornhill, my hand is not on my Cheapside in making these professions. There is a lasting impression on my heart, though there is none on the shelves of the publisher.

To the Reviewers in general, my gratitude is eminently due for their very impartial friendliness. It would have sufficed to reconcile me to a far greater portion than I have met with, of critical viper-tuperation. The candid journalists,

* The first series of Whims and Oddities was published in the year 1827. *Contents.* Moral Reflections on the Cross of St. Paul's. — The Prayse of Ignorance. — A Valentine. — "Please to Ring the Belle." — Love. — A Recipe — for Civilization. — On the Popular Cupid. — "The Last Man." — Backing the Favorite! — The Ballad of "Sally Brown and Ben the Carpenter." — A Complaint against Greatness. — The Mermaid of Margate. — My Son, Sir. — As it Fell upon a Day. — A Fairy Tale. — The Spoiled Child. — The Fall of the Deer, from an old MS. — December and May. — A Winter Nosegay. — Equestrian Courtship. — "She is far from the Land." — Fancies on a Tea-Cup. — The Stag-Eyed Lady. A Moorish Tale. — Walton Redivivus. A New River Eclogue. — "Love Me, Love my Dog." — Remonstratory Ode. — A New Life-Preserver. — A Dream. — The Irish Schoolmaster. — Faithless Nelly Gray. A Pathetic Ballad. — The Sea-Spell. — Fancy Portraits.

who have condescended to point out my little errors, deserve my particular thanks. It is comely to submit to the hand of taste and the arm of discrimination, and with the head of deference I shall endeavor to amend (with one exception) in a New Series.

I am informed that certain monthly, weekly, and very every-day critics, have taken great offence at my puns: — and I cannot conceive how some Gentlemen with one idea must be perplexed by a double meaning. To my own notion a pun is an accommodating word, like a farmer's horse, — with a pillion for an extra sense to ride behind; — it will carry single, however, if required. The Dennises are merely a sect, and I had no design to please, exclusively, those verbal Unitarians.

Having made this brief explanation and acknowledgment, I beg leave, like the ghost of the royal Dane, to say "Farewell at once," and commend my remembrance and my book together, to the kindness of the courteous reader.

ADDRESS TO THE THIRD EDITION.

It is not usual to have more than one grace before meat, one prologue before a play — one address before a work, — Cerberus and myself are perhaps the only persons who have had three prefaces. I thought, indeed, that I had said my last in the last impression, but a new Edition being called for, I came forward for a new exit, after the fashion of Mr. Romeo Coates, — a Gentleman, notorious, like Autumn, for taking a great many leaves at his departure.

As a literary parent, I am highly gratified to find that the elder volume of Whims and Oddities does not get snubbed, as happens with a first child, at the birth of a second; but that the Old and New Series obtain fresh favor and friends for each other, and are likely to walk hand in hand like smiling brothers, towards posterity.

Whether a third volume will transpire is a secret still

"warranted undrawn" even to myself; — there is, I am aware, a kind of nonsense indispensable, — or *sine qua non*-sense — that always comes in welcomely to relieve the serious discussions of graver authors, and I flatter myself that my performances may be of this nature; but having parted with so many of my vagaries, I am doubtful whether the next November may not find me sobered down into a political economist.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND SERIES.

In the absence of better fiddles, I have ventured to come forward again with my little kit of fancies. I trust it will not be found an unworthy sequel to my first performance; indeed, I have done my best, in the New Series, innocently to imitate a practice that prevails abroad in duelling — I mean, that of the Seconds giving Satisfaction.

The kind indulgence that welcomed my Volume heretofore, prevents me from reiterating the same apologies. The Public have learned, by this time, from my rude designs, that I am no great artist, and from my text, that I am no great author, but humbly equivocating, bat-like, between the two kinds; —

though proud to partake in any characteristic of either. As for the first particular, my hope persuades me that my illustrations cannot have degenerated, so ably as I have been seconded by Mr. Edward Willis, who, like the humane Walter, has befriended my offspring in the Wood.

In the literary part I have to plead guilty, as usual, to some verbal misdemeanors; for which, I must leave my defence to Dean Swift, and the other great European and Oriental Pundits. Let me suggest, however, that a pun is somewhat like a cherry: though there may be a slight outward indication of partition — of duplicity of meaning — yet no gentleman need make two bites at it against his own pleasure. To accommodate certain readers, notwithstanding, I have refrained from putting the majority in italics. It is not every one, I am aware, that can Toler-ate a pun like my Lord Norbury.*

PREFACE.†

When I last made my best bow in this book, I imagined that the public, to use a nautical phrase, had "parted from their best bower;" but it was an agreeable mistake. The First and Second Series, being now, like Colman's "Two Single Gentlemen rolled into one," a request is made to me, to furnish the two-act piece with a new prologue. Possibly, as I have declared the near relationship of this work to the Comic Annual, the publisher wishes, by this unusual number of Prefaces, to connect it also with the Odes and *Addresses*. At

* *Contents of the Second Series.* Bianca's Dream. A Venetian Story. — A Ballad-Singer. — Mary's Ghost. — The Progress of Art. — A School for Adults. — A Legend of Navarre. — The Demon-Ship. — Sally Holt, and the Death of John Hayloft. — A True Story. — The Decline of Mrs. Shakerly. — Tim Turpin. A Pathetic Ballad. — The Monkey-Martyr. A Fable. — Banditti. — Death's Ramble. — Craniology. — An Affair of Honor. — A Parthian Glance. — A Sailor's Apology for Bow-Legs. — "Nothing but Hearts!" — Jack Hall. — The Wee Man. — Pythagorean Fancies. — "Don't you smell Fire?" — The Volunteer. — A Marriage Procession. — The Widow. — A Mad Dog. — John Trot. — An Absentee. — Ode to the Cameleopard. — A May-Day.

† To the two series in one volume.

all events, I accede to his humor, in spite of a reasonable fear that, at this rate, my Sayings will soon exceed my Doings.

To tell the truth, an Author does not much disrelish the call for these "more last words;" and I confess at once that I affix this preliminary postscript, with some pride and pleasure. A modern book, like a modern race-horse, is apt to be reckoned aged at six years old; and an Olympiad and half have nearly elapsed since the birth of my first editions. It is pleasant, therefore, to find, that what was done in black and white has not become quite gray in the interval; to say nothing of the comfort, at such an advanced age, of still finding friends in public, as well as in private, to put up with one's Whims and Oddities.

Seriously, I feel very grateful for the kindness which has exhausted three impressions of this work, and now invites another. Come what may, this little book will now leave four imprints behind it, — and a horse could do no more.

WINCHMORE HILL, *January*, 1832.

WHY DON'T YOU GET UP BEHIND?

PREFACES TO THE COMIC ANNUALS.

1830.

In the Christmas Holidays — or rather Holly Days, according to one of the emblems of the season — we naturally look for mirth. Christmas is strictly a Comic Annual, and its specific gayety is even implied in the specific gravity of its oxen. There is an English proverb of "Laugh and grow Fat," — a saying which our graziers interpret — on the authority of some prize Oxonian — by growing the fattest of fat for the merriest of months. The Proverb, however, has another sense, implying a connection between cachinnation and corpulence in the human body — and truly, having seen gentlemen of twenty stone in their seats, I am ready to allow that a fat man is always a *cheerful*.

Taking the adage in the latter sense, it is my humble hope and aim to contribute towards the laughter and lustiness of my fellow-creatures, by the production of The Comic Annual, — a work not equivocating between Mirth and Melancholy, but exclusively devoted to the Humorous — in plain French, not an "Ambigu," but an "Opera Comique." Christmas, indeed, seems a Tide more adapted for rowing in the Gig or the Jolly, than tugging in the Barge or the Galley, and accordingly I have built my craft. The kind friends who may patronize the present launch, are assured that it will be acknowledged by renewed exertion, and that I seriously intend to come before them next year, with

"A braver bark, and an increasing sail."

The materials which were in preparation for a Third Series of "Whims and Oddities" have been thrown into the present volume — that work may, therefore, be still considered as

going on, though its particular name is not exhibited — but it is a partner in the Comic Firm. Each future Series will in the same manner be associated with the whims and oddities of other authors; — and it will be my endeavor to feed every succeeding volume with the choicest morsels that can be procured. In short, the work will be pampered — like Captain Head. In the mean time many little defects, incidental to a first attempt, will be observed and pointed out by the judicious critics; to whom, consciously and respectfully, I bow, like Norval, — "with bended bow and quiver full of errors;" merely hoping, timidly, that as second thoughts are allowed to be best, — they will deal mildly with my first ones.

In my illustrations, as usual, preferring Wood to Copper or Steel, I have taken to *Box* as the medium for making hits. For some of the designs, I am indebted to private Friends, and in particular to one highly talented young Lady, who has liberally allowed me to draw upon her drawings, and with an unusual zeal for my wood-cuts, has, I may say, devoted her head to the block. It is difficult to return thanks for such deeds, but I feel deeply indebted to the kindness by which her pencil was led. I am under a similar obligation to several Pens, — justly deserving the title of "*Good Office* Pens" — from the friendly nature of their service.

Of The President of the Royal Academy, his Fellows and Associates, I humbly beg pardon for any offences against the rules of their Art. My pretensions are modest — I only profess to black lead a little, and not to black lead the Great — I presume merely to handle a small slip of pencil, and not to wield, like them, the Cedars of Lebanon. The Literary Critics are requested to look upon the letter-press in the same spirit, and to remember, before killing "The Comic," that it is as the late Giraffe, "the only one of its kind in England." The work, indeed, at present, is like the celebrated Elephant that had no rival but himself. If, however, others of the kind should spring up, all the Editor wishes for is an open field and fair play.

1831.

A FINE spring — a fine country — a fine illness and the getting over it — an action of fine and recovery, — all together running me very fine indeed, have retarded the appearance of this Annual beyond the usual period. It will, however, enhance the best, and repay the worst of these circumstances, if a public, proverbially kind, should pronounce it "Better Late than Never."

I shall not, I hope, lose my seat in the House of Uncommons, by this delay in standing a second time for the county of Comic, the figure — no figure of fun — that preceded me having been chaired in November only, as what Sir Walter Scott calls "The County Guy."

Now, I do not intend, like some votaries of freedom, to cast mud on the muddy, or dirt on the dirty, — but, while I am on the hustings, I will ask the Committee of that Uncandid Candidate, "The New Comic," whether it was quite honest to canvass against me under my own colors, and to pass off the enemy's poll-book as mine? The Code of Honor should be a kind of Coade's Cement between man and man, — but, to speak technically, some seemed bound by it and some unbound. Mr. Hurst gave me his word, and shook hands thereon, that the delusive title should be altered; and yet that bad title to a good name, "The New Comic," is still retained. Surely he feels both the brand and the blush in what Byron calls "that red right hand."

Were there no other and fitter labels extant than such close parodies of mine? For example, The Laughing Hyæna — or the Merry Unwise; — or The Main-Chance? The Old Brown Bear in Piccadilly is bearish perhaps — but he is Original.

The coupling, in advertisement, "The New Comic," with a volume really mine, is a trick that smacks of the neighborhood. There is as little difference as distance between the plying of 65, St. Paul's Churchyard, and the plying of the Fulhams and Brentfords close at hand.

The Editor of the Edinburgh Literary Journal was actually induced to swallow what Izaak Walton would call the *Cad*-bait,

— and after a jolt in the "New" concern, was induced to criticise it as a ride in the old.

Fain would I drop here the Steel Pen for a softer quill, to speak of an Editress who — distinguishing fair from unfair — has acted the perfect brunette towards me, and has brought a heavy charge against me "for work done." In the Announcement of "The Comic Offering" — a little book chiefly remarkable for a coat of damson cheese, seeming equally fit, like Sheridan's poor Peruvians, for "covering and devouring," — it is insinuated that I am an author unfit for female perusal: — I, who have never that respect infringed which, with me, dwells "like fringe upon a petticoat." Miss Sheridan and modesty compel me to declare, that, many Ladies have deigned to request for their albums, some little proof of "the versatility" or prosatility of my pen: — yet what says the Announcement, or Denouncement: "But shall we permit a Clown or Pantaloon to enter the Drawing-room or Boudoir — no, *not even under a Hood!*"

Putting Pantomimic people on a par, — was Clown Grimaldi so very unfit for the drawing-room of Mrs. Serle, — or Pantaloon Barnes for the Boudoir of Miss Barnet? Is it vulgar to go to Margate by the Harlequin, but genteel by the Columbine — to read "The Comic," instead of the "Offering to be Comic?" To put the Screw of Comparison into my Cork Model, have I made any drawing less worthy of the drawing-room, than "Going it in High Style"? — any verse more perverse to gentility than, —

Old Bet crying "Mac-ca-rel!" happened to meet —

Gad a mercy! Did Miss Sheridan never read or see a Comedy called the School for Scandal? If she has heard of my indelicacy or vulgarity, it must have been from Sir Benjamin Backbite. Mrs. Candor compels me to confess that I am not guilty of either. Joseph Surface would give me credit for morality; and even those Crabtrees, the reviewers, have awarded me the praise of propriety, — confessing that though I am merry, my spirits are rectified. Like Sir Peter Teazle, I would willingly resign my character to their discussion, — but little Moses has a *post obit* on my reputation, and forbids my silence. I confess, besides, that on being so attacked by a perfect stranger, I did at first think it rather hard

of her; but having now seen her book, I think it rather soft of her, and shall say no more.

To pass from this mood to the potential, let me record my thanks to Mr. G. W. Bonner, for doing all that Wood could, or should, for my designs; he has acted, in fact, a practical paradox, by being most friendly in cutting me, and has thereby rendered me his debtor, both in impression and expression.

To divide myself amongst those to whom I owe questions, suggestions, and good wishes, I should be like a hashed Hare with many Friends. The major part of my Book, however, is miner than mine of last year, and as such, I commend it to its course, sincerely hoping, that what is my Work, may be the amusement and relaxation of others, in Town, in Country, and in the Suburbs.

THE OUTSKIRTS.

1832.

It is with sincere gratification that I proclaim, for the third time, the banns between this Annual and the Public; for when a work has been thus regularly "asked out," there seems a likelihood that the reader intends to cleave unto it for the future. I am duly sensible of the distinction The late Dr.

Gregory, in his Legacy, has said, that a female ought to be ready to bestow her affection on an admirer, out of mere gratitude for his preference; and on the same principle the Comic feels, and begs to acknowledge, quite a passion for the Nobility, Gentry, and the public in general.

It would be a vanity — for persons may be as vain of their modesty as of any other quality — to affect much diffidence or timidity on a third appearance. As recommended by the Board of Health, I discard anxiety and keep up my spirits, trusting sanguinely to the favorableness of the present season for the present volume. Between the reform Bill and the Cholera, the public has been so drugged by the House of Commons and Doctors'

DOCTORS' COMMONS.

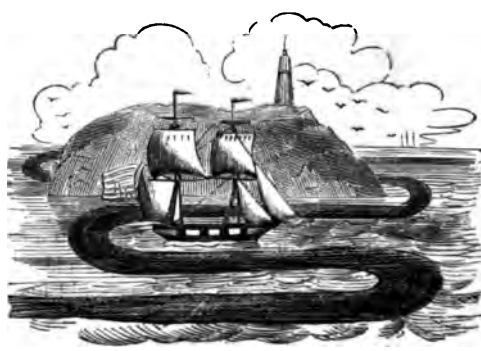
Commons, that figures of speech, neither political nor medical, must come as figures in high relief. Accordingly, by the advice of Sir Henry Halford and my Publisher, I have added five hundred copies to my impression; and if these should hereafter be left on the shelf, I shall be consoled for the private loss by the public gain — supposing, of course, that the one hundred and

ninety-nine Lords will have taken the warning of "BILL-STICKERS BEWARE!" and that the Indian pest shall be obliterated by that Indian rubber, Mahomed of Brighton.

I am happy to say, that this year I have no occasion to complain of my contemporaries. The Falstaff that attempted to "Burke" me last year, is himself a subject for the Coroner; and the Offering seems remorsefully to have swallowed its own laudanum. The Humorist, it is true, is out of humor; but not with me; so that there are hopes, for the future, that between the Comics there will be no serious misunderstanding.

To prevent any other misapprehensions, it may be as well to state, that the article called "Domestic Didactics," is by no means intended as a quiz on the Attempts at Rhyme by an Old Servant of Dr. Southey; but only as a wholesome warning, after the manner of Dean Swift, to footmen in general against their courtship of the Nine, when they may be wanted by ten; and of the absurdity of their setting out for Parnassus, when they are required to attend at Almack's or the Italian Opera. In the same manner, the author of "An Assent to the Summut of Mount Blank" might be supposed to have been a servant of E. B. Wilbraham, Esq.; whereas, not to mention the internal evidence of the blue and silver livery, the reader of that gentleman's account, in the Keepsake, will remember that no followers are mentioned — except the guides.

Having thus explained, I respectfully make my bow, and tender my Christmas Present for the present Christmas.



TO BE CONTINUED.

1833.

For the fourth time I come forth with my volume, which, thanks to mild Critical weather, has now stood through three winters; and may therefore lay claim, by Mr. Loudon's permission, to the designation of a "Hardy Annual."

Those only who have been pressed to death by a Newspaper, and made to walk through a Valley of the Shadow of Death, haunted by printers' devils, can estimate the ghost-like pleasure I feel in thus appearing again in sheets. Owing to an obscure sentence in the Comic Offering, partaking rather

"JACK'S ALIVE!"

of Burke than Sheridan, my literary, if not bodily departure, was prematurely announced in the Herald, the Atlas, and the Metropolitan.

"Thrice the Banshee cried."

But I have no inclination to be passively tied neck and heels, and thrown into the Lake of Darkness, like the Gauger at the command of the rantipole wife of Rob Roy. I have seen but thirty-five summers, and with regard to my Constitution am strictly a Conservative. As Wordsworth says of a little child, I feel my life in every limb, and indeed I know on high authority, that I am as nearly related to the Undying One, as Miss Sheridan herself. That Lady must, therefore, be content to "live and let live," a little longer; and if other parties have wilfully perristed in throwing the pall over me, they will find by this volume, that they have neither gained their end nor mine.

To pass to a death which I heartily wish could be contradicted, as easily as my own, — the reader will find some verses* which allude to One, who has now left both Mortality and Immortality behind him. I feel it necessary to state that the Poem was composed some months before that event, — and in a tone of pleasantry, which would not now accord with my feeling in writing of the Master Genius of the age.

> Farewell, Sir Walter Scott, secured
> From Time, — our greatest of Inditers!
> No Author's fame 's so well *assured*,
> For all who wrote were *Under-writers*.

Amongst other favors, I have to thank S. Gibbons, Esq., to whose kindness and connection with the East India trade, I am indebted for the specimen of Chinese humor which is figured at page 46.† It was drawn by an artist of the name of Hum, — a native of the Celestial Empire.

The beautiful frontispiece I owe to the kindness and pencil of Harvey, — a name to which my blood and my book owe equal acknowledgment. One Harvey discovered my *circulation*, and the other will assuredly increase it.

I feel bound in extra boards and common justice to state that a Gentleman who has perused the papers relative to the Farm of the Zoölogical Society, assures me, on the honor of a Fellow, there is no such person as Stephen Humphreys on that establishment.

Perhaps it is also due to Sir Francis Freeling to declare that, however kindly he regards this work in general, I am not indebted to any official connivance on his part, for the

* The Compass, with Variations.
† The Tea Garden, in the sketch entitled "The Abstraction."

unusual number of "strictly private" letters, both Foreign and Domestic, which transpire in the following pages.

With these necessary explanations I make my annual bow, and commend to Lord Brougham and the other "Great Lights of the age," my little Volume of light reading.

1834.

For the fifth time, like the annual Woodcock, I make my autumnal appearance; and, according to his habit, am to be found in the same haunt as the year before, frequenting leaves, and wood, and covers.

Since the last season I have taken many flights, far and near, and with all my little power of suction have plied my bill around the springs of the Humorous and the Comic, which are, in the words of Bewick, "oozing rills that are rarely frozen." In such plashy nooks the woodcock is said to plump himself up in a single night, — and the sportsman who beats these pages in pursuit of mirth, must judge whether I have employed my time in laughing and growing fat, according to the proverb. Should I be received with the same relish and welcome as that estimable bird of passage, I shall indeed consider myself as "*flushed* with success."

To descend from metaphor, and stoop, as Pope says, to truth, I feel a sincere Captain Ross-like pleasure in re-appearing before my friends; although I cannot expect quite so pointed and fervent a welcome as a gentleman whose absence has kept all his well-wishers sitting on magnetic pins and needles. It is likely, therefore, that the Lord Mayor will not ask *me* to feast with him; but I am given to understand that eleven copies of my volume will certainly be invited to Stationers'-Hall. This, to an author, is more than enough of civic distinction.

As usual, I have endeavored to conciliate the utilitarians, by mingling a little instruction with amusement, after the manner of the Library of Entertaining Knowledge. Thus the Reformer of our Legal Institutions will meet with a few submissive hints; and so will the religious Formalist, on the exuberant exercise of the holy-stone on the upper deck; while an improvement is suggested in naval poetry; and a protest

is entered against the British Leaf, even as King James Counter-blasted the Virginian. I would fain be of use to my countrymen; and only regret that I have not the power ascribed to me by a very respectable householder of the neighborhood, who has called repeatedly when I have been at home, to inquire "when I should be out"! After reminding me that last year I had made game of the Zoölogical Farm, and satirized the Fasting, and taken off the Water-drinking,— "Why," said he "can't you *take off* the Assessed Taxes?"

It will of course be objected as heretofore, by certain reviewers, that my pages swarm with puns; but having taken out a certificate to "shoot folly as it flies," I shall persist in

BUYER AND CELLAR — LIGHT WINE.

using the double barrel as long as meanings will rise in coveys. As a Cambridge coachman, who had acquired the habit from the Collegians, once remarked to me, "I do not see why words should not now and then be put into double-harness as well as horses." The late Admiral Burney, of all the adventures in his voyages, used to look back with the utmost pleasure on the

fact of his having planted the Paranomasia in the Society Islands, by making the first pun ever uttered in the Otaheitan language. The natives received the novelty with a shout of approbation, and patronized it so warmly, that, according to recent voyagers, they are now become as expert at double-tongueing as Nicholson or Drouet.

It is usual, in the preface of an Annual, for the Editor to offer his acknowledgments to his Contributors; but as I have nobody to thank but myself, — for, as Coriolanus says, "Alone I did it," — the acknowledgment will be better made in private, after the fashion of the eccentric Doctor Monsey, who, when he had taken his own advice for his own indisposition, used to transfer the usual Physician's fee from his right-hand pocket to the left. I must not omit, however, to express here how much I feel indebted to Miss Kelly for a copy of "Sally Simpkin's Lament," and still more so for the original of Sally herself, in the Entertainment at the Strand Theatre; — a personation of such admirable truth and nature, that even an incredulous public will be apt to take my Ballad Narratives for Facts, not Fictions.

With this introduction, I commend my fifth volume to its Buyers and Sellers; and looking forward to "fresh fields and pastures new," I throw up my literary heels, and exclaim with the Peri, in Lalla Rookh, —

"Joy, joy, forever — my task is done,
The gate is passed, and heaven is won!"

1835.

A STITCH IN TIME.

"WELL, men alive!" — as Walking Stewart used to address the Cashier and Clerks of a Life Assurance Office, where he held an annuity, — "well, men alive, here I am again!" Although somewhat later than usual, I am still in good time. The winter is not far advanced — its first snow is now lying on the ground. At all events January is not out, and the Comic *is*.

I do not pretend to compete with the fast ones among my Contemporaries, whom "Time gallops withal," till the Old Mower is blown and distressed by the rattling pace he must go at to keep up with them, to say nothing of the desperate leaps he must take that Christmas may fall about Michaelmas, and the New Year begin in October. "There is a time," it is written, "for everything," — but the saying does not seem to be applied to Annuals: — the "quarter of an hour too soon," recommended by Lord Nelson, is stretched into a quarter of a year. To judge by the distance at which certain Editors lay hold of it, Time's forelock must be a thousand

times longer than a Chinese pigtail! — but is there not something approaching to cruelty to animals, in hauling him along by it till he breaks his shins over his own calendar, or knocks his head against one of his own date-trees? He is, we know, a notable *Edax Rerum* — but it is therefore necessary to give him his dinner at breakfast time? Must he always have his victuals in advance — his Good-Friday buns on the Thursday, and his Shrove-Tuesday pancakes on the Monday before? Time and tide wait for no man, and in return the Editors of the Annuals seem determined not to wait for time or tide. Literary gentlemen who have no doubt read and relished Thomson, ought to know better than to shuffle the four seasons together like the four suits at cards. It is not decent with their antedated volumes, whilst the Old Year is still vigorous, to show us the New Year standing barefooted, and waiting to slip into his shoes. What would be thought of a sportsman who set before his friends a leash of partridges with a boat of bread-sauce on the Glorious First of June? What would be said if the Waits would n't wait, but, beating time by two months, began their Christmas serenades upon the Festival of St. Simon and St. Jude? What would be done if the boxing Beadle of St. Bride's took it into his head to go about carolling his "glad tidings of great joy" on the Eve of Gunpowder Plot? But what could, would, and should be thought, said, and done if one of these very *forward* Editors thought proper to prematurely salute his Lady Contributors all round, by warrant of a sprig of misletoe, on Lord Mayor's Day? To be consistent, are the gentlemen in question as precocious in their private as their public habits? Do they put on their winter woollen and great-coats at the first hint from Sirius, and slip into nankeens and washing waistcoats at sight of the first snow-drop? Do they unfurl their umbrellas on Midsummer Day against St. Swithin, and lay in salt cod and *fresh* eggs, in January, against Lent in March? In short, do not they anticipate in everything — even to keeping the birthday of "the babe that is unborn" and breakfasting over night, and knocking at number nine to leave a card at number twelve?

The "Oriental," with its sultry associations, and those naked natives, might properly appear in the dog-days, if duly dated, but what has the "Winter's Wreath" to do with May-

day. Is it really the nick to produce the Stanfields, when the sickle is in the cornfields? Ought *Heaths* to appear in London, just when grouse-shooting begins on the *Moors*? Is it wise to present a Friendship's Offering so long before its ostensible date, that a moderately everlasting friendship might be born, bred, and buried in the interval — above all, ought the Juveniles intended for Christmas and New Year's gifts, to come out coeval with "Bartlemy Fairings," in the very teeth of the opinion of Donna Inaz about juveniles, —

"To be precocious
She reckoned of all things the most atrocious?"

For my own part, I affect none of these unseasonable forestallings: I never in my life gave five guineas for a quart of very early peas, or a crown a pound for very new potatoes. I am content with things as they naturally ripen, without forcing; and my gardener, who inclines to *otium cum dig* — is of the

OTIUM CUM DIG——

same opinion; forcing *time* is quite of the question. What rational man would give a dump for a chronometer "warranted fast?" I never like Scott's stern Covenanter, give the long

hand a push forwards, in its course round the dial; feeling that Sol, who drives the Old Regulator, knows his daily pace too well to be deceived; still less should I dream of juggling my Royal Almanac by having plumb-pudding, mince-pie, and snap-dragon before the fall of the leaf. Thus it is that my Annual for 1835 did not come out in 1834, like certain other volumes, which doubtless plume themselves, and chuckle over their being so early, as the "bonnie gray cock" did, after misleading the Scottish Juliet in the ballad, by "crowing an hour too soon." I should be loath to suggest such treatment of my precocious brethren, — but did n't she twist Chanticleer's neck for it, till he could no more cry cock-a-doodle than a cork-screw?

If it be "well to be off with the old love, before you are on with the new," it is particularly a prudent principle with regard to old and new years. For example, had this work been published precipitately in September, its pages would have been closed against such a subject as the burning of the Parliament Houses, instead of my having the gratification of contributing my quota of facts and materials, for the use of the future Humes and Smolletts of the British Empire. Let the extra early reflect well on this point, and they may come to the conclusion, that a day before the fair is as bad as a day after it. Surely it can be of no earthly use to hurry your beasts into Smithfield on Wednesday, because Friday is cattle-day!

As I have alluded above to the Great Conflagration, I am anxious to say a few words, lest some exception should be taken to the choice of such a subject, by some of those decidedly serious characters who are fun-proof all over, and may therefore feel disposed to exclaim, "Fire is no joke, burning houses are not things to play upon." They have no notion of what Scrub calls "laughing consumedly." Properly impressed with every grave feeling that belongs to such a catastrophe, I have nevertheless made it my business to collect, arrange, and record, all the whimsicalities that arose out of the calamity, for in this motley world the most solemn events sometimes give birth to very comical issues. As many journalists have described the most tragic parts of the narrative, I felt the more called upon to present the ludicrous passages that occurred, and thus supply the lights to the shades of a picture that is destined to occupy a prominent place in the National Gallery. The accuracy of the statements may be

implicitly relied upon. The Jubb letters are from real originals, and any gentleman who may be sceptical upon the epistle of Ann Gale, shall be welcomed to her hand. I confess I had doubts myself of the genuineness of M. Chabert's account, till it was corroborated by a policeman (N. 75), who assured me that he was severely burnt in both hands by a large hot inkstand that was delivered to him by a gentleman in a great-coat. For the rest of the particulars I confidently appeal to the Ode to Mr. Buckingham, with its ex-tracts from the Temperance Report itself, in proof of my anxiety to adduce nothing that cannot be strictly verified. The descriptive reports of the fire I had from the highest authorities, persons for instance on the steeple of St. Margaret's Church, or in the iron galleries of the monument and St. Paul's. Besides, I was at the scene myself. Through my not being personally intimate with all the Peers, and indeed with many of the Commoners, I may have made some confusion as to individuals; such as mistaking Sir John Hobhouse for Lord Althorp, or Mr. Cobbett for Sir Andrew Agnew, or Mr. O'Gorman Mahon for Mr. Pease. I can only say, that all such errors will be cheerfully amended, on application, in a new edition; and that if any nobleman, or gentleman, who was present, feels himself hurt by being out of the fire, a warm place shall be booked for him, in either House, or the Hall, at his own option, or he may go over them all in three heats.

With this liberal promise, I bow, and take my leave, sincerely hoping that I have committed no breach of privilege in publishing such Parliamentary Proceedings, and that throughout the narrative there is no call for any cry like

"CHAIR, CHAIR! ORDER, ORDER!"

1836.

ONCE more — from a crest overlooking Kaltererberger in the Eifel — I make my annual bow. To be sure, I am more than two thousand feet above the level of the sea; on a Teutonic mountain, in the midst of a palpable fog, to which it is accustomed eight days out of seven, — but neither difference nor distance make any difference to us Germans in our salutes; — we can bow round a corner, or down a crooked lane. To see us bow retrospectively sometimes would remind you of that polite Author, who, submitting to a classical authority, said with an appropriate bend, "I bow to the Ancients."

And truly, of all bowers that ever bowed, including Lord Chesterfield, the royal inventor of the "Prince's bow," the booing Sir Archy Macsycophant, Tom Moore, and his Bowers of Bendermeer, all the admirals of blue, white, and red, with their larboard bows, and starboard bows, all the bow-loving schoolmasters with their "Where's your bow?" and finally, Macduff and his whole army, who boughed out Macbeth — of all these, no man ever scraped his foot without a scraper, or bent so agreeably to his own bent, as your very humble obedient servant. To be candid, I am in the humor to bow — age commands respect — to an old post. 'T is better than bowing to a *post obit.*

"O my masters!" as the laborer said to the bricklayers, after falling through the roof and rafters of an unfinished house, "I have gone through a great deal since you saw me last."

First, there was my narrow escape in the Hoffnung off Cuxhaven, so narrow indeed, that I felt upon what is called "the edge of doom," newly ground. I only wonder, that terrible storm, instead of letting me bow to you smilingly like Sir Robert Smirke, did not shake, terrify, and bully me into a serious writer; solemnly bending as we might suppose Blair to have done with a presentation copy of his "Grave." Secondly, there was my dangerous consultation of complaints, in the Spring, with its complication of High German physicians; namely, two Animal-Magnetizers: three Homœopathics, four "Bad" advisers, and the famous Doctor Farbe. The practice,

which does not make perfect, of the first set of sine-*cure*-ists is well known, — The unit doses of the Hahnemannites have been tried as well as all the *orts* you have to eat after them; and the "bad" recommendations, have been well tested by thousands of Accums. I need not describe how, combining exercise with mineral waters, I walked by uneasy stages from Mayence to Coblentz and back again, with a bottle in one hand and a glass in the other; drinking my own health, at every hundred yards, in a tumbler of one part pickle, one part soda-water, one part soapsuds, one part ink, one part sour milk, one part musty egg, one part gall, and one part pump-water. I need not describe, how I bathed at Ems and Schlangenbad, but I will describe how I bathed at Schwalbach, as the Author of Bubbles from the Brunnens advises; namely, in the strong Stahl, or Steel, Brunnen, and dipping my head as Head persuades heads to be dipped, I soon found out the reason why "the cunning Jews" all go to the Stahl Brunnen, — I had steeled my face so that no razor would touch it!

Of Doctor Farbe I must make more mention, as he may not yet have quacked loud enough to be heard in England. He has read somewhere, in St. Pierre if I recollect rightly, that insects take the color of that which they feed upon; and acting upon this hint, he proposes, by proper tints in diet, to paint one up to "a perfect picture of Health." First, he proceeds by negatives: for example, in yellow jaundice, you are not to take mustard, yolk of egg, oranges, pease-pudding, saffron cakes, apricots, or yellowhammers. In hypochondria or blue devils, he forbids plums with the bloom on, peas, if blue Prussians, blue rocks, sky-blue, and blue ruin. In scarlet fever, love-apples, red streaks, red currants, Cayenne pepper, red cabbage, and scarlet runners. In black jaundice, black currants, blackcocks, blackbirds, liquorice, blackheart cherries, black puddings, and black-strap. And so forth, according to the hue. Then he prepares for the positive treatment, by endeavoring, like a dyer, to take all color out of you before he gives you a new tint. To this end he plies you with water ices, creams, white meats with white sauce, cauliflowers, turnips, blanc-mange, and lily-white mussels; gives you besides a ton of chalk to lick, like a country calf, to whiten your veal. Should he succeed in bleaching you to a plaster

cast of yourself, your cure is certain; he has then only to give you the true Hebe complexion, by commending you, when the season suits, to plenty of "strawberries smothered in cream." But on the contrary, should the case prove obstinate, he attempts to divert it; for instance, he tries to turn yellow jaundice into green, by a blue diet; or the frightful blue stage of cholera into a green one, by a yellow diet; or, what is preferable, into a purple stage, by the exhibition of pink Noyeau. As for black jaundice he has a method of making it piebald by the white diet, or in mild cases of reducing it to the spotted state, or Dalmatian. Finally, in extremity, he has recourse to his neutral tint, which is intended to make you neither one thing nor another: to this end, he mixes up all his dietetical pigments together, and it was at this point, when he had prescribed for me a compound of blue ruin, black-strap, scarlet runners, green cheese, brown stout, mustard, flour, and a few trifles besides, without consulting my *palate*, that I begged him to "give me over." He took his fee, and retired in dudgeon: and I never saw his white beaver, turned up with green, his plumb-colored coat with a brown collar, his velvet waistcoat with tulips in their natural colors on a purple ground, his sky-blue pantaloons with a pink stripe up the seams, his gray stockings, and his yellow handkerchief with a rainbow border, any more! It was just in time. If I had not struck his colors he would have struck mine.

O my Friends! Foes! and Indifferents! was not that an escape, narrower by nine hairbreadths than the Hoffnung's? But, methinks, you ask, how came I, with my delicate health, for change of air on the top of this ever-foggy mountain? My well-wishers, the answer is easy. I was smoked out down below. As you all know, it is a time of profound peace; and the Germans all profoundly celebrate it like the American Indians, each with his calumet, or Pipe of Peace in his mouth. Such an atmosphere as you would find anywhere beneath has made me far from particular: I do not despise mists, and even on this elevated ridge am not above fogs. But, farewell! I smell a snow-storm coming, for I cannot see it; I hear a wind blowing-up, and I feel the clouds attempting to seduce this steadfast pinnacle into a waltz. Farewell! My next last words will perhaps be wafted to you

from the top of Caucasus; but still depend on my warm affections. Like Goldsmith's Traveller, or Land Surveyor, "I drag at each remove a lengthening chain," or as his absentee countryman attempted the sentiment in prose to his wife, "the further I get from you the more I like you."

And, finally,

EGGS ARE VERY NOURISHING.

1837.

COURTEOUS and Gentle Reader! — for the eighth time greeting; — for as "the short-fingered little progeny" exclaims at her grand piano, "Thank Goodness! I have reached an octave at last!" The Comic has lived to see a second Olympiad; and as no Competitor appears in the Arena, it may modestly assume that it is crowned with success.

And now for a few words under the rose: if, indeed, it be not too late for even the Last Rose of Summer. I am afraid, if you have read my Announcement, that the present Volume will seem not to quite square with that Circular: you will expect a little more political pepper and spice than will be found in the seasoning. The truth is, I am all abroad, not figuratively but geographically; in a remote land. where before The Times

arrives, it is like "the good old times," rather out of date; and consequently I get my news, as some persons receive their game, too far gone to be of use. This accident of distance escaped my memory whilst penning the promises contained in my Prospectus. I forgot the difficulty of estimating the prospects of England, and giving my own views of them, when England itself was out of sight. Moreover, not having recently read Elia's Essay on Distant Correspondents, I overlooked the possibility of the true becoming false, and the false true, — of the undone being done, and the done undone, — in the interval between my speculations and their publication. Thus, whilst I was sitting, unshaved, in my old clothes, arguing

A DISSENTER'S MARRIAGE.

on paper for Hebrew Emancipation — the act was, perhaps, actually passed; and the Jews engaged in an appropriate *Jew*-bilee. At the very time I was contending, with all the stiffness of a steel pen, for the rights of Dissenters to marry ac-

cording to their own forms — the Dissenters — marry come up! might be standing in an *altared* position, and in possession of all their *rites*. I might have been getting up an urgent call for the Repeal of the Corn Laws — when the Corn Laws had been regularly outlawed, at the poetical petition of Ebenezer Elliott and Corney Webbe. At the same hour, whilst I was writing in deprecation of Sabbath-Bills, and Parliamentary Piety — Sir Andrew had, perchance, embraced Judaism, and exchanged Sunday for Saturday. My Strictures reprobating Bull-baiting in Exeter Hall, might have been anticipated by the nuisance abating itself into a display of Calves. A Series of Nine Tales, with Cuts, illustrative of the cruelty of Military Flogging might have become superfluous by Law having tied up the Drummers; or the Army itself having reversed the practice by cutting the cat. I might have been insisting on a fairer mode of Registration — when the whole system had been Rumfordized and the Books ordered to be kept on the principle of Cobbett's Register. A scheme for the settlement of the Agitated Irish Church — might have found the Agitated Irish Church turned into an English Chapel of Ease. A project for the gradual Extinction of Tithes might have been rendered useless — by the clergy throwing up Tithes, and adapting the Voluntary Principle as a Voluntary for the Church Organ. A Friendly Warning to Conservatives and Destructives on the Danger of Division with an offer of Mediation might have addressed itself to Parties already bound by an alliance offensive and defensive; hand and glove with each other, and foot and shoe to everybody else. I might have put forth a Lament for the defunct Close Corporations, when the Corporations had jumped into their skins again and were stuffing out their old Bodies. The Abolition of Sinecures Enforced — might have found the Gentleman-with-nothing-to-do, placed on a reduced Scale of Duties. My Call for a Change in Currency might have proved quite uncalled for — the Circulating Medium being allowed to get change (farthings excepted) whenever required. The "Policy of Free Trade Asserted and Assured" might have been anticipated, by Trade having been presented with the Freedom of the World in a pill-box. A Modest Plea for the better Protection of Copyright might have been forestalled by the appointment of Captains Glascock, Marryatt, and Chamier, as literary cruis-

ers to carry new Piracy Laws into effect. A Work on the Working of the New Poor Laws might have turned out a work of supererogation — there being no Poor for Laws to work upon, the Philanthropic Party having transformed all the paupers, at their own expense, into Poor Gentlemen. And,

CLOSE CORPORATIONS.

finally, how foolish I should have looked with my "Remarks on the Franchise," or the "Complaint of a Ten Pound Voter, a shilling short" — if in the mean time voters were admitted by avoirdupois, as a test of their weight in the Country!

Thus you see, dear Courteous Reader, how much excellent Politics I might have thrown away upon shadows: to say nothing of the disagreeable danger of writing for the Party which was out, instead of the Party that was in. For if Knowledge be Power, then Power should be Knowledge; and they ought always to be found on the same side. I have

therefore reluctantly circumscribed the sphere of my utility; contenting myself with furnishing a Report on Agricultural Distress, which, like the report of a gun, will serve to startle the deep silence that has brooded over the Parliamentary Enquiry on the same subject.

"HAVE I A WOTE FOR GRINNAGE?"

The Ode to Dr. Hahnemann is recommended, with infinitesimal respect, to the consideration of those Members of the Faculty who, adopting the doctrine of minute doses, prescribe for their patients on Temperance Principles; and have established their Dispensary in Pump Court. I have only further to declare, that the Anecdote of Simon Paap is true; and that the incidents of the Fatal Bath stand equally on the solid legs of fact.

And now, Courteous Reader, farewell — for another twelvemonth, farewell! Whether you will ever *year* from me again is a periodical problem only to be solved by Time. Perchance, you would not already have seen so many of these my Annuals, but for a severe visitation I suffer under, and which nothing but the Comic can relieve. You will remember — for who has not read the Arabian Nights En-

tertainments? — the adventure of Sinbad the Sailor with that horrid Old Man of the Sea. Alas! during nine months of the twelve I have such another Day-Mare on my own shoulders. For three quarters of every year he is on my back, trying to break me in to his own humor, the "decidedly serious." Week after week, I am beset by his letters, the whole drift of which is to make me like Peter Bell, a "sadder and a wiser man." Page after page — and they are like the pages of a hearse — he doles out his doleful advice to me, to subdue what he is pleased to call my levity. And truly, if anything could turn my animal spirits, "white spirits and black, red spirits and gray," into blue devils, it would be the perusal of his lugubrious epistles. They read like "Letters from the Dead to the Living." He has a 40-Undertaker-power of depression, and if he talk as he writes, must have a toll in his tone that would cast a damp on a Burial Society. Who can he be? But that Lewis (see "Tayler's Records of my Life") is dead and buried, I should take him to be that King of Grief. Perhaps he is a resurrection of Heraclitus. He never writes down the word laughter without "idiotic for a prefix; smiles are apish grimaces, and he seriously assures me, what I as seriously believe, that he is insensible to jests, a detester of clenches," and one who could never see the fun in what is called fun. "Miserrimus" should be his motto. He dates from Slough — but it must be the Slough of Despond: his very seals seem to bear the impression of dumps. "Man is made to mourn" is his favorite quotation; but he culls funereal flowers besides from Young's Night Thoughts, Blair's Grave, and Hervey's Meditations among the Tombs. His letters accordingly are mere Dirges in Prose. He describes life as a long wet walk thro' a vale of tears by land; — and a *Wail*ing voyage by water. Now, like Milton, and all other men, I have, when unwell, my fits of *Ill* Penseroso; but let me be ever so hypped and low, the receipt of one of his epistles finds "in my lowest depth a lower still." For a week afterwards, I am as grave and saturnine as if I had been visiting the Cave of Trophonius; I dream even of my Gloomy Unknown in the likeness of Giant Despair cut in Cypress; and wake, though it be a May morning, with the yellow fog-damps of November hanging over my spirits. If he would but let me alone! but 't is not in the nature of his sect. Mel-

ancholy has "marked him for her own," and he wants everybody to be tarred with the same stick. I have tried to evade his correspondence: but by means of feigned hands, change of seals and other artifices, he contrives to poke his dismals at me, with the sombre pertinacity of a carrion crow boring a dead horse. The only thing which stops his croak is the Comic. For some three months from its publication — as if he had given me over as incorrigible or incurable — I am free from the persecution of his favors: but after that bright period has elapsed, he sets in again with his accustomed severity: generally with a letter of condolence on the levity of my spirits. Then he mounts his hobby again! — he vaults on my back, and for the rest of the year rides me — woe worth him! — like a Black Brunswicker, with a Death's head and Marrow-bones for his cognizance.

Judge then, Courteous Reader, with what gladness of heart I am now penning the last sentences of a book, which, if it will not knock my Tormentor on the head quite so effectually as Sinbad brained his Back-fare with a great stone, will at least stun and dumbfound him for three moons to come. May it do as much for you, dear Reader, — though but for a few hours, — if you have Dull Care upon your Shoulders!

1838.

THERE are nine Muses to a Poet; nine Tailors to a Man; nine points of the law to "one possessed;" nine lives to a cat; nine tails to a flogging; nine points to an agony of whist; nine diamonds to Pope Joan; nine ninepins to a bowl; nine cheers to a toast; and now there are nine Comic Annuals to the set.

Whatever may be the mystic influence of the witching number —

> "Thrice to thine,
> And thrice to *mine*,
> And thrice again to make up *Nine!*"

My little work is now within its sphere. The cycle is complete; the tything time is come; and, like Rudolph's Seventh

Bullet, my Ninth Volume is now at evil behest. In what manner the Weird Sisters will choose to do their wicked will with it, is past sounding; but of course they will try their best or worst to turn it into a Work of Darkness. They are notorious jugglers, practising on the senses with shows and unreal mockeries; and I feel as if the coldest wind of the Brocken were blowing over me, to think what diabolical appearances they may cause my book to assume.

I remember reading, in some Romance, of an unfortunate man thrown by "some devilish cantrip sleight," as Burns calls it, into such an optical delusion, that, whilst he thought he was only carving up a fowl, he was committing a foul murder. That is an awful power of garbling! and the Fatal Three will chuckle at such a piece of literal Printer's Devilry as fobbing off their own matter for mine on a cheated public.

Thus I have tried, as usual, to furnish forth a little harmless amusement for the Christmas fireside; but, thanks to Hecate and her imps! the most innocent play upon words will perhaps be transformed, to shock the decidedly pious reader, into a play upon the Scriptures. I have imagined a factitious correspondence, by way of shadowing out the inefficiency of certain establishments where Young Gentlemen are "boarded, lodged, and done for;" but it will be as good a joke as laming cattle, for the spiteful Hags to show some indignant Schoolmaster his own name, and that of his Academy, at full length, in capitals, and as plain to all the Public as the show-board at his front gate.

In the same desire of being useful, I have tried to show up the imposture of Animal Magnetism; but what can be expected from juggling Witches, patronesses of every cheat on the human body or soul, except that they will turn the whole article to an atrocious libel on some living Practitioner? The little instance of Mistaken Patronage I have adduced will infallibly be cooked up into an attack on the Aristocracy; and, by working the faces in the drawings into likenesses, the whole Volume, text and cuts, may be thus bewitched into a collection of personalities and political squibs and caricatures. Finally, the Critics will, no doubt, be hounded on to worry the devoted pages! for, alas! what grammar can withstand such gramarye, — what spelling be proof against such spells?

The most charming style might be charmed out of its propriety, and the droppings of a comic vein be transmuted, so as to show to the eyes of the Reviewer as mere "baboon's blood."

It is with some misgivings, then, that I put forth the New Volume under such awful auspices. Those who have not lived under the gloomy shadow of the Brocken, — who have not heard a Weird Trio from the Witches' Orchestra, or made their own reflections on the Witches' Lake, or tasted the Witches' Spring, or essayed in vain to dry the chilly oozings of the Witches' Dog-Stone, — will be apt to deride a faith in such Teutonic theories; indeed, in hunting, racing England, the mere notion of "*witching* the world with noble horsemanship" on the back of such an un-clever hack as a birch besom, would suffice to bring the whole creed into disrepute. It is difficult, however, to reside long in Germany without believing, more or less, in those Old Original Broom Girls. Antiquated, ugly, and revolting as they appear in more sylvan scenery, in the neighborhood of their own thick and slab Mountain, amid the wild, savage features of the Black Forest, the withered Beldames, "formed to engage all *Hartz*, and *charm* all eyes," are absolutely enchanting. The locality must, then, excuse terrors, which are apt to haunt wanderers in those wild regions. A little month may serve to dissipate all such fears; for should nothing happen out of the common — Macbeth called it a "blasted heath" — to the present Volume, I shall be quite ready to suppose that the Weird Women have bought new brooms, and swept themselves clean away from the face of the earth.

And now, with three times three in bows, and all seasonable benisons — may they not be Sycoraxed into malisons! — I take my leave for the ninth time. We may meet again — and we may not meet again. Who but a Witch knows which?

1839.

"CIRCUMSTANCES OVER WHICH I HAVE NO CONTROL."

THE Tenth Comic Annual is now in the field; and, luckily, it is a field of which no tithe can be demanded in kind or in unkind.

To account for the unusual lateness of the present crop in coming to market, it must be told how, at the eleventh hour, when all that ought to be cut was cut, and only a small portion wanted carrying, the laborers, one and all, master and man, were suddenly disabled by the same complaint, and confined to the same bed. Marry, it was a shrewd attack too! But that is over and gone, as the broken-ribbed man said of the cartwheel.

And now having made this necessary explanation, it would, perhaps, be the most prudent course to make my bow without further prefacing. Nothing is more difficult than to address the Public perennially on the same subject: a fact well understood by the Beadle of my old precinct of St. M*****, B*****, who, as usual, presented me at Christmas tide with a copy of verses. Instead of the Scriptural doggerel, however, which used to fill up his broadside, and which indeed had become sufficiently stale and irksome, the sheet exhibited a selection of Elegant Extracts from our Standard Authors; and by no means a bad assortment, if our Scarabæus Parochialis had not most whimsically garbled the pieces to suit a purpose of his own. Finding, perhaps, that original composition was beyond his bounds, that Parnassus, in fact, was not in his Parish, he had contrived, by here and there interpolating a line or two of his own, to adapt the lays of our British Bards to his Carol. For instance, Gray's celebrated Elegy in a Country Churchyard was thus made to do duty, after this fashion.

The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way —
And this is Christmas Eve, and here I be!

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
Save Queen Victoria, who the sceptre holds!

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain —
Save all the ministers that be in power,
Save all the Royal Sovereigns that reign!

. . . . .

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
The Parish Beadle calling at the door!

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life,
They kept the apple-woman's stalls away!

. . . . .

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh;

With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
He never lets the children play thereby.

. . . . . .

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn,
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the Reverend Vicar all in lawn!

One morn I missed him on the 'customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favorite tree;
Another came, nor yet beside the rill,
Nor at the Magpie and the Stump was he!

The next *with hat and staff, and new array,*
Along all sorts of streets we saw him borne;
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
He always brings upon a Christmas morn!

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send;
He gave to misery (all he had) a tear,
And never failed on Sundays to attend!

No further seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode;
Where they alike in trembling hope repose,
John Bugsby, Number Thirteen, Tibbald's Road.

Was not that, my Worthy Masters and Mistresses, a desperate shift to be put to for an Annual Address?

And now, Gentle Reader, farewell! Should we two be left alive at the end of the eighteen hundred and thirty-nine Articles, we shall, probably, meet again. But the oddities, as the old lady said, are sadly against one. Menaced by all the torches in England, all the rushes in Russia, the Great Petersburg Yellow Candle, and the Links at Edinbro', 't will be a mercy should Britain escape Unspontaneous Combustion. However, should she prove fireproof for so long, you may look Westward Ho! for my return by the Flying Dutchman.

1842.

It is with unusual gratification that the present Volume is offered to the Public: indeed, with a pleasure more like that of a young budding Author, who finds himself for the first time sprouting into leaves, than the soberer enjoyment of a veteran Writer whose immortality has at least outlived two Monarchs and twice as many Ministries.

The truth is, that I seemed to have said "Amen" to the "Amenities of Literature," — to have deposited my last work on the library-shelf. For a dozen successive years, some annual volume had given token of my literary existence. I had appeared with my prose and verse as regularly as the Parish-Beadle — once a year, as certainly as the parochial plum-pudding — at the end of every twelve months, like the *Stationers' Almanac*. My show was perennial, like that of the Lord Mayor. But, alas! Anno Domini 1840 was unmarked by any such publication! A tie seemed snapped — a spell appeared to be broken — my engine had gone off the rail! Indeed, so unusual a silence gave rise to the most sinister surmises. It was rumored in Northamptonshire that I was in a public prison — in Brussels, that I was in a private madhouse — and in Cornhill, that I was annihilated. It was whispered in one quarter that I had quitted literature in disgust, and turned fishmonger — in another, that I had enlisted, like Coleridge, in the Dragoons — in a third, that I had choked myself, like Otway, with a penny roll — in a fourth, that I had poisoned myself, like Chatterton; or plunged into the Thames, like Budgell. I had gone, like Ambrogetti, into La Trappe — or to unsettle myself in New Zealand. But the majority of the reporters were in favor of my demise; and a Miss Hoki, or Poki, even declared that she had seen the Angel of Death, whom she rather irreverently called "Great Jacky," standing beside my pillow. It must be confessed that my own character and conduct tended to countenance these rumors. Naturally of domestic and retired habits, my taste more inclined me to the joys of a Country Mouse than to those of a Town Lion. There are persons who seem,

like Miss Blenkinsop's curls, to be never "out of the papers;" but it was no ambition of mine to be constantly buzzing like a chafer in the public ear, or flying like a gnat into the public eye. The reporters never echoed my name like that of the Boy Jones. I had never aimed at Royalty and Notoriety with the same bullet. I had neither gone up with Mr. Green, nor down with Corporal Davy Jones, — nor blown up great guns like Colonel Pasley, — nor tried my shell or my rocket at Woolwich like the Duc de Normandie, — nor made myself a Joint-Stock Company, — nor taken a single rod, pole, or perch in Egypt, much less an Acre. I had not made a row in Newman Street, Oxford Street, at Number Ninety. I had not even exhibited those signs of Life in London, which are fatal to knockers and street-lamps. In short, for any noise or stir about town, I might as well have been buried at Holyrood. Nevertheless, the surmise was as premature as the report that killed Mr. Davidge. Instead of leaving this world, or the world of letters, I was really bargaining — by the help of Father Mathew and Bernard Kavanagh, *alias* Temperance and Abstinence, — for a Renewed Lease of Life and Literature, the first-fruits of which are collected in this little volume. And may it contribute to that Diffusion of Mirth to which it has always been my aim to lend a Hand!

DUKE OF WELL—— AND PRINCE OF WATER——.

HOOD'S OWN.

1838.

THE MERRY THOUGHT.

PREFACE:

BEING AN INAUGURAL DISCOURSE ON A CERTAIN SYSTEM OF PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY.

COURTEOUS READER, —

Presuming that you have known something of the Comic Annual from its Child-Hood, when it was first put into half binding and began to run alone, I make bold to consider you as an old friend of the family, and shall accordingly treat you with all the freedom and confidence that pertain to such ripe connections.

How many years is it, think you, "since we were first acquent?"

"By the deep *nine!*" sings out the old bald *Count Fathom* with the lead-line: no great lapse in the world's chronology, but a space of infinite importance in individual history. For instance, it has wrought a serious change on the body, if not on the mind, of your very humble servant; — it is not, however, to bespeak your sympathy, or to indulge in what Lord Byron calls "the gloomy vanity of drawing from self," that I allude to my personal experience. The Scot and lot character of the dispensation, forbids me to think that the world in general can be particularly interested in the state of my Household Suffrage, or that the public ear will be as open to my Maladies as to my Melodies. The simple truth is, that, being a wiser but not sadder man, I propose to admit you to my Private View of a system of Practical Cheerful Philosophy, thanks to which, perchance, the cranium of your Humorist is still secure from such a lecture as was delivered over the skull of Poor Yorick.

In the absence of a certain thin "blue-and-yellow" visage, and attenuated figure, — whose effigies may one day be affixed to the present work, — you will not be prepared to learn that some of the merriest effusions in the forthcoming numbers have been the relaxations of a gentleman literally enjoying bad health — the carnival, so to speak, of a personified Jour Maigre. The very fingers so aristocratically slender, that now hold the pen, hint plainly of the "*ills* that *flesh* is heir to:" — my coats have become great-coats, my pantaloons are turned into trousers, and, by a worse bargain than Peter Schlemihl's, I seem to have retained my shadow and sold my substance. In short, as happens to prematurely old port wine, I am of a bad color with very little body. But what then? That emaciated hand still lends a hand to embody in words and sketches the creations or recreations of a Merry Fancy: those gaunt sides yet shake heartily as ever at the Grotesques and Arabesques and droll Picturesques that my Good Genius (a Pantagruelian Familiar) charitably conjures up to divert me from more sombre realities. It was the whim of a late pleasant Comedian, to suppose a set of spiteful imps sitting up aloft, to aggravate all his petty mundane annoyances; whereas I prefer to believe in the ministry of kindlier Elves that "nod to

me and do me courtesies." Instead of scaring away these motes in the sunbeam, I earnestly invoke them, and bid them welcome; for the tricksy spirits make friends with the animal spirits, and do not I, like a father romping with his own urchins, — do not I forget half my cares whilst partaking in their airy gambols? Such sports are as wholesome for the mind as the other frolics for the body. For on our own treatment of that excellent Friend or terrible Enemy, the Imagination, it depends whether we are to be scared and haunted by a Scratching Fanny, or tended by an affectionate Invisible Girl — like an unknown Love, blessing us with "favors secret, sweet, and precious," and fondly stealing us from this workyday world to a sunny sphere of her own.

This is a novel version, Reader, of "Paradise and the Peri," but it is as true as it is new. How else could I have converted a serious illness into a comic wellness — by what other agency could I have transported myself, as a Cockney would say, from *Dull*age to *Grin*nage? It was far from a practical joke to be laid up in ordinary in a foreign land, under the care of Physicians quite as much abroad as myself with the case; indeed the shades of the gloaming were stealing over my prospect; but I resolved, that, like the sun, so long as my day lasted, I would look on the bright side of everything. The raven croaked, but I persuaded myself that it was the nightingale: there was the smell of the mould, but I remembered that it nourished the violets. However my body might cry craven, my mind luckily had no mind to give in. So, instead of mounting on the black long-tailed coach horse, she vaulted on her old Hobby that had capered in the Morris-Dance, and began to exhort from its back. To be sure, said she, matters look darkly enough; but the more need for the lights. Allons! Courage! Things may take a turn, as the pig said on the spit. Never throw down your cards, but play out the game. The more certain to lose, the wiser to get all the play you can for your money. Come — give us a song! chirp away like that best of cricket-players, the cricket himself. Be bowled out or caught out, but never throw down the bat. As to Health, it 's the weather of the body — it hails, it rains, it blows, it snows, at present, but it may clear up by and by. You cannot eat, you say, and you must not drink; but laugh and make believe, like the Barber's wise brother at the Bar-

mecide's feast. Then, as to thinness, not to flatter, you look like a lath that has had a split with the carpenter and a fall out with the plaster; but so much the better: remember how the smugglers trim the sails of the lugger to escape the notice of the cutter. Turn your edge to the old enemy, and mayhap he won't see you! Come — be alive! You have no more right to slight your life than to neglect your wife — they are the two better halves that make a man of you! Is not life your means of living? so stick to thy business and thy business will stick to thee. Of course, continued my mind, I am quite disinterested in this advice — for I am aware of my own immortality — but for that very reason, take care of the mortal body, poor body, and give it as long a day as you can!

Now, my mind seeming to treat the matter very pleasantly as well as profitably, I followed her counsel, and instead of calling out for relief according to the fable, I kept along on my journey, with my bundle of sticks, — i. e. my arms and legs. Between ourselves, it would have been "extremely inconvenient," as I once heard the opium-eater declare, to pay the debt of nature at that particular juncture; nor do I quite know, to be candid, when it would altogether suit me to settle it, so, like other parties in narrow circumstances, I laughed, and gossiped, and played the agreeable with all my might, and as such pleasant behavior sometimes obtains a respite from a human creditor, who knows but that it may prove successful with the Universal Mortgagee? At all events, here I am, humming "Jack's Alive!" and my own dear skilful native physician gives me hopes of a longer lease than appeared from the foreign reading of the covenants. He declares indeed, that, anatomically, my heart is lower hung than usual — but what of that? *The more need to keep it up!* So huzza! my boys! Comus and Momus forever! No Heraclitus! Nine times nine for Democritus! And here goes my last bottle of Elixir at the heads of the Blue Devils — be they Prussian blue or indigo, powder-blue or ultramarine!

Gentle reader, how do you like this Laughing Philosophy? The joyous cheers you have just heard come from a crazy vessel that has clawed, by miracle, off a lee-shore, and I, the skipper, am sitting down to my grog, and recounting to you the tale of the past danger, with the manœuvres that were used to escape the perilous Point. Or rather, consider me as

the Director of a Life Assurance, pointing out to you a most beneficial policy, whereby you may eke out your natural term. And, firstly, take precious care of your precious health, — but how, as the housewives say, to make it keep? Why then, don't cure and smoke-dry it — or pickle it in everlasting acids — like the Germans. Don't bury it in a potato-pit, like the Irish. Don't preserve it in spirits, like the Barbadians. Don't salt it down, like the Newfoundlanders. Don't pack it in ice, like Captain Back. Don't parboil it, in Hot Baths. Don't bottle it, like gooseberries. Don't pot it — and don't hang it. A rope is a bad Cordon Sanitaire. Above all, don't despond about it. Let not anxiety "have thee on the hyp." Consider your health as your best friend, and think as well of it, in spite of all its foibles, as you can. For instance, never dream, though you may have a "clever hack," of galloping consumption, or indulge in the Meltonian belief, that you are going the pace. Never fancy, every time you cough, that you are going to coughy-pot. Hold up, as the shooter says, over the heaviest ground. Despondency in a nice case is the over-weight that may make you kick the beam and the bucket both at once. In short, as with other cases, never meet trouble halfway, but let him have the whole walk for his pains; though it should be a Scotch mile and a bittock. I have even known him to give up his visit in sight of the house. Besides, the best fence against care is a ha! ha! — wherefore take care to have one all round you wherever you can. Let your "lungs crow like Chanticleer," and as like a GAME cock as possible. It expands the chest, enlarges the heart, quickens the circulation, and "like a trumpet makes the spirits dance."

A fico then for the Chesterfieldian canon, that laughter is an ungenteel emotion. Smiles are tolerated by the very pinks of politeness; and a laugh is but the full-blown flower of which a smile is the bud. It is a sort of vocal music — a glee in which everybody can take a part: — and "he who hath not laughter in his soul, let no such man be trusted." Indeed, there are two classes of Querists particularly to be shunned; thus when you hear a Cui Bono? be sure to leave the room; but if it be Quid Rides? make a point to quit the house, and forget to take its number. None but your dull dogs would give tongue in such a style; — for, as Nimrod says in his "Hunt after Happiness," "A single *burst* with Mirth is worth a whole season of *full cries* with Melancholy."

Such, dear reader, is the cheerful Philosophy which I practise as well as preach. It teaches to "make a sunshine in a shady place," to render the mind independent of external foul weather, by compelling it, as old Absolute says, to get a sun and moon of its own. As the system has worked so well in my own case, it is a duty to recommend it to others: and like certain practitioners, who not only prescribe but dispense their own medicines, I have prepared a regular course of light reading, whereof I now present the first packet, in the humble hope that your dull hours may be amused, and your cares diverted, by the laughing lucubrations which have enlivened Hood's Own.

THE PORTRAIT:

BEING AN APOLOGY FOR NOT MAKING AN ATTEMPT ON MY OWN LIFE.

THE late inimitable Charles Mathews, in one of his amusing entertainments, used to tell a story of a certain innkeeper, who made it a rule of his house to allow a candle to a guest, only on condition of his ordering a pint of wine. Whereupon the guest contends, on the reciprocity system, for a light for every half-bottle, and finally drinks himself into a general illumination.

Something of the above principle seems to have obtained in the case of a Portrait and a Memoir, which in literary practice have been usually dependent on each other, — a likeness and a life, — a candle and a pint of wine. The mere act of sitting probably suggests the idea of hatching; at least an author has seldom nested in a painter's chair, without coming out afterwards with a brood of Reminiscences; and accordingly, no sooner was my effigy about to be presented to the Public, than I found myself called upon by my Publisher, with a finished proof of the engraving in one hand, and a request for an account of myself in the other. He evidently supposed, as a matter of course, that I had my auto-biography in the bottle, and that the time was to come to un-cork and pour it out *with a Head.*

To be candid, no portrait, perhaps, ever stood more in need of such an accompaniment. The figure opposite has certainly the look of one of those practical jokes whereof the original is oftener suspected than really culpable. It might pass for the sign of "The Grave Maurice." The author of Elia has declared that he once sat as substitute for a whole series of British Admirals,* and a physiognomist might reasonably suspect that, in wantonness or weariness, instead of giving my head I had procured myself to be painted by proxy. For who, that calls himself stranger, could ever suppose that such a pale, pensive, peaking, sentimental, sonneteering countenance — with a wry mouth as if it always laughed on its wrong side — belonged *bona fide* to the Editor of the Comic, — a Professor of the Pantagruelian Philosophy, hinted at in the preface to the present work? What unknown, who reckons himself decidedly serious, would recognize the head and front of my "offending," in a visage not at all too hilarious for a frontispiece to the Evangelical Magazine! In point of fact the owner has been taken sundry times, ere now, for a Methodist Minister, and a pious turn has been attributed to his hair — *lucus a non lucendo*— from its having no turn in it at all.† In like manner my literary contemporaries, who have cared to remark on my personals, have agreed in ascribing to me a melancholy bias; thus an authority in the New Monthly Magazine has described me as "a grave, anti-pun-like looking person," whilst another — in the Book of Gems — declares that "my countenance is more grave than merry," and insists, therefore, that I am of a pensive habit, and "have never laughed heartily in company or in rhyme." Against such an inference, however, I solemnly protest, and if it be the fault of my features, I do not mind telling my face to its face that it insinuates a false Hood, and grossly misrepresents a person notorious amongst friends for laughing at strange times and odd places, and in particular when he has the worst of the rubber. For it is no comfort for the loss of points, by his theory, to be upon thorns. And truly what can be more unphilosophical, than to sit ruefully as well as whistfully, with

* He perhaps took the hint from Dibdin, who lays down the rule in his Sea Songs, that a Naval Hero ought to be a Lion in battle, but afterwards a Lamb.

† On a march to Berlin, with the 19th Prussian Infantry, I could never succeed in passing myself off as anything but the Regimental Chaplain.

your face inconsistently playing at longs and your hand at shorts, — getting hypped as well as pipped, — "talking of Hoyle," as the city lady said, "but looking like winegar," and betraying as keen a sense of the profit and loss, as if the *pack* had turned you into a *pedler*.

"ON THE CARD-RACK."

But I am digressing; and turning my back, as Lord Castlereagh would have said, on my face. The portrait, then, is genuine — "an ill-favored thing, Sir," as Touchstone says, "but mine own." For its quarrel with the rules of Lavater there is precedent. I remember seeing on Sir Thomas Lawrence's easel, an unfinished head of Mr. Wilberforce, so very merry, so rosy, so good-fellowish, that nothing less than the Life and Correspondence recently published could have persuaded me that he was really a serious character. A memoir, therefore, would be the likeliest thing to convince the world that the physiognomy prefixed to this number is actually Hood's Own; — indeed, a few of the earlier chapters would suffice to clear up the mystery, by proving that my face is only answering in the affirmative the friendly inquiry of the Poet of all circles — "Has sorrow thy young days shaded?" — and telling the honest truth of one of those rickety constitutions which, according to Hudibras, seem

"as if intended
For nothing else but to be mended."

To confess the truth, my vanity pricked up its ears a little at the proposition of my Publisher. There is something vastly flattering in the idea of appropriating the half or quarter of a century, mixing it up with your personal experience, and then serving it out as your own Life and Times. On cast-

ing a retrospective glance, however, across Memory's waste, it appeared so literally a waste that vanity herself shrank from the enclosure act, as an unpromising speculation. Had I foreseen, indeed, some five-and-thirty years ago, that such a demand would be made upon me, I might have laid myself out on purpose, as Dr. Watts recommends, so as "to give of every day some good account at last." I would have lived like a Frenchman, for effect, and made my life a long dress rehearsal of the future biography. I would have cultivated incidents "*pour servir*," laid traps for adventures, and illustrated my memory like Rogers's, by a brilliant series of Tableaux. The earlier of my Seven Stages should have been more Wonder-Phenomenon Comet and Balloon-like, and have been timed to a more Quicksilver pace than they have travelled; in short, my Life, according to the tradesman's promise, should have been "fully equal to bespoke." But, alas! in the absence of such a Scottish second-sight, my whole course of existence up to the present moment would hardly furnish materials for one of those "bald biographies" that content the old gentlemanly pages of Sylvanus Urban. Lamb, on being applied to for a Memoir of himself, made answer that it would go into an epigram; and I really believe that I could compress my own into that baker's dozen of lines called a sonnet. Montgomery, indeed, has forestalled the greater part of it, in his striking poem on the "Common Lot," but in prose, nobody could ever make anything of it, except Mr. George Robins. The lives of literary men are proverbially barren of interest, and mine, instead of forming an exception to the general rule, would bear the application of the following words of Sir Walter Scott much better than the career of their illustrious author. "There is no man known at all in literature, who may not have more to tell of his private life than I have. I have surmounted no difficulties either of birth or education, nor have I been favored by any particular advantages, and my life has been as void of incidents of importance as that of the weary knife-grinder — 'Story! God bless you, I have none to tell, sir.'"

Thus my birth was neither so humble that, like John Jones, I have been obliged amongst my lays to lay the cloth, and to court the cook and the muses at the same time; nor yet so lofty, that, with a certain lady of title, I could not write without letting myself down. Then, for education, though on the

one hand I have not taken my degree, with Blucher; yet, on the other, I have not been rusticated, at the Open Air School, like the Poet of Helpstone. As for incidents of importance, I remember none, except being drawn for a soldier, which was a hoax, and having the opportunity of giving a casting vote on a great parochial question, only I did n't attend. I have never been even third in a duel, or crossed in love. The stream of time has flowed on with me very like that of the New River, which everybody knows has so little romance about it, that its Head has never troubled us with a Tale. My own story, then, to possess any interest, must be a fib.

Truly given, with its egotism and its barrenness, it would look too like the chalked advertisements on a dead wall. Moreover, Pope has read a lesson to self-importance in the Memoirs of P. P., the Parish Clerk, who was only notable after all amongst his neighbors as a swallower of loaches. Even in such practical whims and oddities I am deficient, — for instance, eschewing razors, or bolting clasp-knives, riding on painted ponies, sleeping for weeks, fasting for months, devouring raw tripe, and similar eccentricities, which have entitled sundry knaves, quacks, boobies, and brutes to a brief biography in the Wonderful Magazine. And, in the absence of these distinctions, I am equally deficient in any spiritual pretensions. I have had none of those experiences which render the lives of saintlings, not yet in their teens, worth their own weight in paper and print, and consequently my personal history, as a Tract, would read as flat as the Pilgrim's Progress without the Giants, the Lions, and the grand single combat with the Devil.

To conclude my life, — "upon my life," — is not worth giving, or taking. The principal just suffices for me to live upon; and of course, would afford little interest to any one else. Besides, I have a bad memory; and a personal history would assuredly be but a middling one, of which I have forgotten the beginning and cannot foresee the end. I must, therefore, respectfully decline giving my life to the world — at least till I have done with it — but to soften the refusal, I am willing, instead of a written character of myself, to set down all that I can recall of other authors, and, accordingly, the next number will contain the first instalment of

MY LITERARY REMINISCENCES.

LITERARY REMINISCENCES.

"Commençons par le commencement."

THE very earliest of one's literary recollections must be the acquisition of the alphabet; and in the knowledge of the first rudiments I was placed on a par with the Learned Pig, by two maiden ladies that were called Hogsflesh. The circumstance would be scarcely worth mentioning, but that, being a day boarder, and taking my dinner with the family, I became aware of a Baconian brother, who was never mentioned except by his Initial, and was probably the prototype of the sensitive "Mr. H." in Lamb's unfortunate farce. The school in question was situated in Token-house Yard, a convenient distance for a native of the Poultry, or Birchin-lane, I forget which, and in truth am not particularly anxious to be more certainly acquainted with my parish. It was a metropolitan one, however, which is recorded without the slightest repugnance; firstly, for that, practically, I had no choice in the matter; and, secondly, because, theoretically, I would as lief have been a native of London as of Stoke Pogis or Little Pedlington. If such local prejudices be of any worth, the balance ought to be in favor of the capital. The Dragon of Bow Church, or Gresham's Grasshopper, is as good a terrestrial sign to be born under as the dung-hill cock on a village steeple. Next to being a citizen of the world, it must be the best thing to be born a citizen of the world's greatest city. To a lover of his kind, it should be a welcome dispensation that cast his nativity amidst the greatest congregation of the species; but a literary man should exult rather than otherwise that he first saw the light — or perhaps the fog — in the same metropolis as Milton, Gray, De Foe, Pope, Byron, Lamb, and other town-born authors, whose fame has nevertheless triumphed over the Bills of Mortality. In such a goodly company I cheerfully take up my livery; and especially as Cockneyism, properly so

called, appears to be confined to no particular locality or station in life. Sir Walter Scott has given a splendid instance of it in an Orcadian, who prayed to the Lord to bless his own tiny ait, "not forgetting the neighboring island of Great Britain;" and the most recent example of the style I have met with, was in the Memoirs of Sir William Knighton, being an account of sea perils and sufferings during a passage across the Irish Channel by "the First Gentleman in Europe."

Having alluded to my first steps on the ladder of learning, it may not be amiss in this place to correct an assertion of my biographer in the Book of Gems, who states, that my education was finished at a certain suburban academy. In this ignorant world, where we proverbially live and learn, we may indeed leave off school, but our education only terminates with life itself. But even in a more limited sense, instead of my education being finished, my own impression is, that it never so much as progressed towards so desirable a consummation at any such establishment, although much invaluable time was spent at some of those institutions where young gentlemen are literally boarded, lodged, and *done for*. My very first essay was at one of those places improperly called *semi*-naries, because they do not half teach anything; the principals being probably aware that the little boys are as often consigned to them to be "out of a mother's way," as for anything else. Accordingly, my memory presents but a very dim image of a pedagogical powdered head, amidst a more vivid group of females of a composite character, — part dry-nurse, part housemaid, and part governess, — with a matronly figure in the background, very like Mrs. S., allegorically representing, as Milton says, "our universal mother." But there is no glimpse of Minerva. Of those pleasant associations with early school-days, of which so much has been said and sung, there is little amongst my retrospections, excepting, perhaps, some sports which, like charity, might have been enjoyed at home, without the drawbacks of sundry strokes, neither apoplectic nor paralytic, periodical physic, and other unwelcome extras. I am not sure whether an invincible repugnance to early rising may not be attributable to our precocious wintry summonses, from a warm bed into a dim, damp school-room, to play at filling our heads on an empty stomach; and perhaps I owe my decided sedentary habits to the disgust at our monoto-

nous walks, or rather processions, or maybe to the sufferings of those longer excursions of big and little, where a pair of compasses had to pace as far and as fast as a pair of tongs. Nevertheless, I yet recall, with wonder, the occasional visits of grown-up ex-scholars to their old school, all in a flutter of gratitude and sensibility at recognizing the spot where they had been caned, and horsed, and flogged, and fagged, and brimstone-and-treacled, and blackdosed, and stickjawed, and kibed, and fined, — where they had caught the measles and the mumps, and been overtasked, and undertaught — and then, by way of climax, sentimentally offering a presentation snuff-box to their revered preceptor, with an inscription, ten to one, in dog Latin on the lid!

For my own part, were I to revisit such a haunt of my youth, it would give me the greatest pleasure, out of mere regard to the rising generation, to find Prospect House turned into a Floor Cloth Manufactory, and the playground converted to a bleachfield. The *tabatière* is out of the question. In the way of learning, I carried off nothing in exchange for my knife and fork and spoon, but a prize for Latin without knowing the Latin for prize, and a belief which I had afterwards to unbelieve again, that a block of marble could be cut in two with a razor.

To be classical, as Ducrow would say, the Athenians, the day before the Festival of Theseus, their Founder, gratefully sacrificed a ram, in memory of Corridas the schoolmaster, who had been his instructor; but in the present day, were such offerings in fashion, how frequently would the appropriate animal be a donkey, and especially too big a donkey to get over the Pons Asinorum!

From the preparatory school, I was transplanted in due time to what is called, by courtesy, a finishing one, where I was immediately set to begin everything again at the beginning. As this was but a backward way of coming forward, there seemed little chance of my ever becoming what Mrs. Malaprop calls "a progeny of learning;" indeed my education was pursued very much after the plan laid down by that feminine authority. I had nothing to do with Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or Paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches; but I obtained a supercilious knowledge of accounts, with enough of geometry to make me

acquainted with the contagious countries. Moreover, I became fluent enough in some unknown tongue to protect me from the French Mark; and I was sufficiently at home (during the vacations) in the quibbles of English grammar, to bore all my parents, relations, friends, and acquaintance by a pedantical mending of their "cakeology." Such was the sum total of my acquirements; being probably quite as much as I should have learned at a Charity School, with the exception of the parochial accomplishment of hallooing and singing of anthems.

I have entered into these personal details, though pertaining rather to illiterate than to literary reminiscences, partly because the important subject of Education has become of prominent interest, and partly to hint that a writer may often mean in earnest what he says in jest. One of my readers at least has given me credit for a serious purpose. A schoolmaster called during the vacation, on the father of one of his pupils, and in answer to his announcement of the re-opening of his establishment, was informed that the young gentleman was not to return to the academy. The worthy parent declared that he had read the "Carnaby Correspondence" * in the Comic Annual, and had made up his mind. "But, my dear Sir," expostulated the pedagogue, "you cannot be serious; why, the Comic Annual is nothing but a book full of jokes!" "Yes, yes," returned the father; "but it has let me into a few of your tricks. I believe Mr. Hood. James is not coming again!"

And now, it may be reasonably asked, where I did learn anything if not at these establishments, which promise Universal Knowledge — extras included — and yet unaccountably produce so very few Admiral Crichtons? † It may plausibly be objected, that I did not duly avail myself of such overflowing opportunities to dabble, dip, duck in, and drink deeply of the Pierian spring; that I was an Idler, Lounger, Tattler, Rambler, Spectator, — anything rather than a student. To which my reply must be, first, that the severest punishment ever inflicted on my shoulders was for a scholar-like offence, the being "fond of my book," only it happened to be Rob-

* *Ante*, page 209.

† In spite of hundreds of associates, it has never happened to me, amongst the very many distinguished names connected with science or literature, to recognize *one* as belonging to a schoolfellow.

inson Crusoe; and, secondly, that I did go ahead at another guess sort of academy, a reference to which will be little flattering to those Houses which claim Socrates, Aristotle, Alfred, and other *Learnedissimi Worthii*, as their Sponsors and Patron Saints. The school that really schooled me being comparatively of a very humble order — without sign — without prospectus, — without ushers — without ample and commodious premises — in short, without pretension, and consequently, almost without custom.

The autumn of the year 1811, along with a most portentous comet, "with fear of change perplexing monarchs," brought, alas! a melancholy revolution in my own position and prospects, by the untimely death of my father; and my elder brother shortly following him to the grave, my bereaved mother naturally drew the fragments of the family more closely around her, so that thenceforward her dearest care was to keep her "only son, myself, at home." She did not, however, neglect my future interest, or persuade herself by any maternal vanity that a boy of twelve years old could have precociously finished his education; and accordingly, the next spring found me at what might have been literally called a High School, in reference to its distance from the ground.

In a house, formerly a suburban seat of the unfortunate Earl of Essex — over a grocer's shop — up two pair of stairs, there was a very select day-school, kept by a decayed Dominie, as he would have been called in his native land. In his better days, when my brother was his pupil, he had been master of one of those wholesome concerns in which so many ignorant men have made fortunes, by favor of high terms, low ushers, gullible parents, and victimized little boys. As our worthy Dominie, on the contrary, had failed to realize even a competence, it may be inferred, logically, that he had done better by his pupils than by himself; and my own experience certainly went to prove that he attended to the interests of his scholars, however he might have neglected his own. Indeed, he less resembled, even in externals, the modern worldly trading Schoolmaster than the good, honest, earnest, olden Pedagogue, — a pedant, perchance, but a learned one, with whom teaching was "a labor of love," who had a proper sense of the dignity and importance of his calling, and was content to find a main portion of his reward in the honorable

proficiency of his disciples. Small as was our College, its Principal maintained his state, and walked gowned and covered. His cap was of faded velvet, of black, or blue, or purple, or sad green, or, as it seemed, of all together, with a *nuance* of brown. His robe, of crimson damask, lined with the national tartan. A quaint, carved, highbacked, elbowed article, looking like an *émigré* from a set that had been at home in an aristocratical drawing-room, under the *ancien régime*, was his Professional Chair, which with his desk was appropriately elevated on a dais, some inches above the common floor. From this moral and material eminence he cast a vigilant yet kindly eye over some dozen of youngsters; for adversity, sharpened by habits of authority, had not soured him, or mingled a single tinge of bile with the peculiar redstreak complexion, so common to the healthier natives of the North. On one solitary occasion, within my memory, was he seriously yet characteristically discomposed, and that was by his own daughter, whom he accused of forgetting all regard for common decorum;" because, forgetting that he was a Dominie as well as a Parent, she had heedlessly addressed him in public as "Father," instead of "Papa." The mere provoking contrariety of a dunce never stirred his spleen, but rather spurred his endeavor, in spite of the axiom, to make Nihil fit for anything. He loved teaching for teaching's sake; his kill-horse happened to be his hobby: and doubtless, if he had met with a penniless boy on the road to learning, he would have given him a lift, like the charitable Wagoner to Dick Whittington — for love. I recall, therefore, with pleasure, the cheerful alacrity with which I used to step up to recite my lesson, constantly forewarned — for every true schoolmaster has his stock joke — not to "stand in my own light." It was impossible not to take an interest in learning what he seemed so interested in teaching; and in a few months my education progressed infinitely farther than it had done in as many years under the listless superintendence of B. A., and L. L. D. and Assistants. I picked up *some* Latin, was a tolerable English Grammarian, and so good a French scholar, that I earned a few guineas — my first literary fee — by revising a new edition of "Paul et Virginie" for the press. Moreover, as an accountant, I could work a *summum bonum* — i. e. a good sum.

In the mean time, — so generally unfortunate is the court-

ship of that bashful undertoned wooer, Modest Merit, to that loud, brazen, masculine, worldly heiress, Success — the school did not prosper. The number of scholars diminished rather than increased. At least no new boys came — but one fine morning, about nine o'clock, a great "she gal," of fifteen or sixteen, but so remarkably well grown that she might have been "any of our mothers," made her unexpected appearance with bag and books. The sensation that she excited is not to be described! The apparition of a Governess, with a Proclamation of Gynecocracy could not have been more astounding! Of course SHE instantly formed a class; and had any form SHE might prefer to herself: — the most of us being just old enough to resent what was considered as an affront on the corduroy sex, and just young enough to be beneath any gallantry to the silken one. The truth was, *sub rosa*, that there was a plan for translating us, and turning the unsuccessful Boy's School, into a Ladies' Academy; to be conducted by the Dominie's eldest daughter — but it had been thought prudent to be well on with the new set before being off with the old. A brief period only had elapsed when, lo! a leash of female school *Fellows* — three sisters, like the Degrees of Comparison personified, Big, Bigger, and Biggest — made their unwelcome appearance, and threatened to push us from our stools. They were greeted, accordingly, with all the annoyances that juvenile malice could suggest. It is amusing, yet humiliating, to remember the nuisances the sex endured at the hands of those who were thereafter to honor the shadow of its shoe-tie — to groan, moan, sigh, and sicken for its smiles, — to become poetical, prosaical, nonsensical, lack-a-daisical, and perhaps even melodramatical for its sake. Numberless were the desk-quakes, the ink-spouts, the book-bolts, the pea-showers, and other unregistered phenomena, which likened the studies of those four unlucky maidens to the "Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties," — so that it glads me to reflect, that I was in a very small minority against the persecution; having already begun to read poetry, and even to write something which was egregiously mistaken for something of the same nature. The final result of the struggle in the academic nest — whether the hen-cuckoos succeeded in ousting the cock-sparrows, or *vice versa* — is beyond my record; seeing that I was just then removed from the scene

of contest, to be introduced into that Universal School where, as in the preparatory ones, we have very unequal shares in the flogging, the fagging, the task-work, and the pocket-money; but the same breaking-up to expect, and the same eternity of happy holidays to hope for in the Grand Recess.

In brief, a friend of the family having taken a fancy to me, proposed to initiate me in those profitable mercantile mysteries which enabled Sir Thomas Gresham to gild his grasshopper; and like another Frank Osbaldestone, I found myself planted on a counting-house stool, which nevertheless served occasionally for a Pegasus, on three legs, every foot, of course, being a dactyl or a spondee. In commercial matters, the only lesson imprinted on my memory is the rule that when a ship's crew from Archangel, come to receive their L. S. D., you must lock up your P. Y. C.

THE WINNER OF THE LEDGER.

MY APOLOGY.

GENTLE READERS, —

For the present month, there must be what Dr. Johnson called a solution of continuity in my "Literary Reminiscences." Confined to my chamber by what ought to be termed *room*atism — then attacked by my old livery complaint — and finally, by a minor, but troublesome malady, the Present has too much prevailed over the Past, to let me indulge in any retrospective reviews. In such cases, on the stage, when a Performer is unable to support his character, a substitute is usually found to read the part; but unfortunately, in the present case there is no part written, and consequently it cannot be read. But *apropos* of theatricals — there is an anecdote on point.

In the Olympic days of the great Elliston, there was one evening a tremendous tumult at his Theatre, in consequence of the absence of a favorite performer. One man in the pit — a Butcher — was especially vociferous in his cry for "Carl! Carl! Carl!" Others called for the Manager, who duly made his appearance, and, black as the weather looked, he was the very sort of pilot to weather the storm. With one of his princely bows he proceeded to address the House. "Ladies and Gentlemen — but by your leave I will address myself to a single individual. I will ask that gentleman (pointing to the vociferous Butcher) what right he has to demand the appearance of Mr. Carl?" "'Cos," said the Butcher, — "'cos he's down in the Bill." Such an undeniable answer would have staggered any other Manager than Elliston, but he was not easily to be disconcerted. "Because he is down in the bill!" he echoed, in a tone of the loftiest indignation: "Ladies and Gentlemen, the Mr. Carl, so unseasonably, so vociferously and so unfeelingly called for, is at this very moment laboring under severe illness — he is in bed. And let me ask, is a man, a fellow-creature, a human being, to be torn from his couch, from his home, on a cold night, from the affectionate attentions

of his wife and family, at the risk of his valuable life perhaps, to go through a fatiguing part because he happens to be DOWN IN THE BILL?" [Cries of "Shame! shame!" from all parts of the house.] "And yet, ladies and gentlemen, there stands a man — if I may call him so — a Butcher, that for his own selfish gratification — the amusement of a few short hours — would risk the very existence of a deserving member of society, a good husband, father, friend, and one of your favorite actors, and all, forsooth, because he is DOWN IN THE BILL!" [Universal hooting, with cries of "Turn him out."] "By all means," acquiesced the Manager, with one of his best bows — and the indignant pittites actually hooted and kicked their own champion out of the theatre, as something more than a Butcher, and less than a Christian.

Now I am myself, gentle readers, in the same predicament with Mr. Carl. Like him I am an invalid — and like him I am unfortunately down in the Bill. It would not become me to set forth my own domestic or social virtues, or to hint what sort of gap my loss would make in Society — still less would it consist with modesty to compare myself with a favorite actor — but as a mere human being I throw myself on your mercy, and ask, in common charity, would you have had me leave my warm bed, to shiver in a printer's damp sheets, at the risk of my reputation perhaps, and for the mere amusement of some half-hour or more, or more probably for no amusement at all — simply because I was "*down in the Bill*"?

But there is no such Butcher, or Butcheress, or little Butcherling, amongst you; and by your good leave and patience, the instalment of my Reminiscences that is overdue shall be paid with interest in the

NEXT NUMBER.

LITERARY REMINISCENCES.

No. I.

Time was, I sat upon a lofty stool,
At lofty desk, and with a clerkly pen
Began each morning, at the stroke of ten,
To write in Bell and Co.'s commercial school;
In Warnford Court, a shady nook and cool,
The favorite retreat of merchant men;
Yet would my quill turn vagrant even then,
And take stray dips in the Castalian pool.
Now double entry — now a flowery trope —
Mingling poetic honey with trade wax —
Blogg, Brothers — Milton — Grote and Prescott — Pope —
Bristles — and Hogg — Glyn Mills and Halifax —
Rogers — and Towgood — Hemp — the Bard of Hope —
Barilla — Byron — Tallow — Burns — and Flax!

My commercial career was a brief one, and deserved only a sonnet in commemoration. The fault, however, lay not with the muses. To commit poetry indeed is a crime ranking next to forgery in the counting-house code, and an Ode or a song dated Copthall Court would be as certainly noted and protested as a dishonored bill. I have even heard of an unfortunate clerk, who lost his situation through being tempted by the jingle to subscribe under an account current

"Excepted all errors
Made by John Ferrers,"

his employer emphatically declaring that Poetry and Logwood could never coexist in the same head. The principal of *our* firm, on the contrary, had a turn for the Belles Lettres, and would have winked with both eyes at verses which did not intrude into an invoice or confuse their figures with those of the Ledger. The true cause of my retirement from Commercial affairs was more prosaic. My constitution, though far from venerable, had begun to show symptoms of decay: my appetite failed, and its principal creditor, the stomach, received only an ounce in the pound. My spirits daily became a shade

lower — my flesh was held less and less firmly — in short, in the language of the price current, it was expected that I must "submit to a decline." The Doctors who were called in declared imperatively that a mercantile life would be the death of me — that by so much sitting, I was hatching a whole brood of complaints, and that no Physician would insure me as a merchantman from the Port of London to the next Spring. The Exchange, they said, was against me, and as the Exchange itself used to ring with "Life let us Cherish," there was no resisting the advice. I was ordered to abstain from Ashes, Bristles, and Petersburg yellow candle, and to indulge in a more generous diet — to take regular country exercise instead of the Russia Walk, and to go to bed early even on Foreign Post nights. Above all, I was recommended change of air, and in particular the bracing breezes of the North. Accordingly I was soon shipped, as per advice, in a Scotch Smack, which "*smacked* through the breeze," as Dibdin sings so merrily, that on the fourth morning we were in sight of the prominent old Steeple of "Bonny Dundee."

My Biographer, in the Book of Gems, alludes to this voyage, and infers from some verses — "Gadzooks! must one swear to the truth of a song?" — that it sickened me of the sea. Nothing can be more unfounded. The marine terrors and disagreeables enumerated in the poem belong to a Miss Oliver, and not to me, who regard the ocean with a natural and national partiality. Constitutionally proof against that nausea which extorts so many wave-offerings from the afflicted, I am as constant as Captain Basil Hall himself, in my regard "for the element that never tires." Some washy fellows, it is true, *Fresh*-men from Cambridge and the like, affect to prefer river or even pond water for their aquatics — the tame ripple to the wild wave, the prose to "the poetry of motion." But give *me* "the multitudinous sea," resting or rampant, with all its variable moods and changeable coloring. Methought, when pining under the *maladie du pays*, on a hopeless sick-bed, inland, in Germany, it would have relieved those yearnings but to look across an element so instinct with English associations, that it would seem rather to unite me to than sever me from my native island. And, truly, when I did at last stand on the brink of the dark blue sea, my home-sick wishes seemed already half fulfilled, and it was not till many months

afterwards that I actually crossed the Channel. But I am, besides, personally under deep obligations to the great deep. Twice, indeed, in a calm and in a storm, has my life been threatened with a salt-water catastrophe; but that quarrel has long been made up, and forgiven, in gratitude for the blessing and bracing influence of the breezes that smack of the ocean brine. Dislike the sea! — With what delight aforetime used I to swim in it, to dive in it, to sail on it! Ask honest Tom Woodgate, of Hastings, who made of me, for a landsman, a tolerable boatsman. Even now, when do I feel so easy in body, and so cheerful in spirit, as when walking hard by the surge, listening, as if expecting some whisperings of friendly but distant voices, in its eternal murmuring. Sick of the sea! If ever I have a water-drinking fancy, it is a wish that the ocean brine had been sweet, or sour instead of salt, so as to be potable; for what can be more tempting *to the eye* as a draught, than the pure fluid, almost invisible with clearness, as it lies in some sandy scoop, or rocky hollow, a true "Diamond of the Desert," to say nothing of the same living liquid in its effervescing state, when it sparkles up, hissing and bubbling in the ship's wake — the very Champagne of water! Above all, what intellectual solar and soothing syrup have I not derived from the mere contemplation of the boundless main, — the most effectual and innocent of mental sedatives, and often called in aid of that practical philosophy it has been my wont to recommend in the present work. For whenever, owing to physical depression, or a discordant state of the nerves, my personal vexations and cares, real or imaginary, become importunate in my thoughts, and acquire, by morbid exaggeration, an undue prominence and importance, what remedy then so infallible as to mount to my solitary seat in the lookout, and thence gaze awhile across the broad expanse, till in the presence of that vast horizon, my proper troubles shrink to their true proportions, and I look on the whole race of men, with their insignificant pursuits, as so many shrimpers! But this is a digression — We have made the harbor of Dundee, and it is time to step ashore in "stout and original Scotland," as it is called by Doctor Adolphus Wagner, in his German edition of Burns.*

* The Baron Dupotet de Sennevoy and Doctor Elliotson will doubtless be glad to be informed, that the inspired Scottish Poet was a believer in

Like other shipments, I had been regularly addressed to the care of a consignee; — but the latter, not anxious, probably, to take charge of a hobbledehoy, yet at the same time unwilling to incur the reproach of having a relative in the same town and not under the same roof, peremptorily declined the office. Nay, more, she pronounced against me a capital sentence, so far as returning to the place from whence I came, and even proceeded to bespeak my passage and reship my luggage. Judging from such vigorous measures the temper of my customer, instead of remonstrating, I affected resignation, and went with a grave face through the farce of a formal leave-taking; I even went on board, but it was in company with a stout fellow who relanded my baggage; and thus, whilst my transporter imagined, good easy soul! that the rejected article was sailing round St. Abb's Head, or rolling off the Bass, he was actually safe and snug in Dundee, quietly laughing in his sleeve with the Law at his back. I have a confused recollection of meeting, some three or four days afterwards, a female cousin on her road to school, who at sight of me turned suddenly round, and galloped off towards home with the speed of a scared heifer.

My first concern was now to look out for some comfortable roof, under which "for a consideration" one would be treated as one of the family. I entered accordingly into a treaty with a respectable widower, who had no sons of his own, but in spite of the most undeniable references, and a general accord-

their magnetismal mysteries — at least in the article of reading a book behind the back. In a letter to Mr. Robert Ainslie is the following passage in proof. "I have no doubt but scholarcraft may be caught, as a Scotchman catches the itch — by friction. How else can you account for it that born blockheads, by mere dint of *handling* books, grow so wise that even they themselves are equally convinced of and surprised at their own parts? I once carried that philosophy to that degree, that in a knot of country folks, who had a library amongst them, and who, to the honor of their good sense, made me factotum in the business; one of our members, a little wise-look, squat, upright, jabbering body of a tailor, I advised him instead of turning over the leaves, *to bind the book on his back*. Johnnie took the hint, and as our meetings were every fourth Saturday, and Pricklouse having a good Scots mile to walk in coming, and of course another in returning, Bodkin was sure to lay his hand on some heavy quarto or ponderous folio; with and under which, wrapt up in his gray plaid, he grew wise as he grew weary all the way home. He carried this so far, that an old musty Hebrew Concordance, which we had in a present from a neighboring priest, *by mere dint of applying it as doctors do a blistering plaster, between his shoulders*, Stitch, in a dozen pilgrimages, acquired as much rational theology as the said priest had done by forty years' perusal of its pages."

ance as to terms, there occurred a mysterious hitch in the arrangement, arising from a whimsical prepossession which only came afterwards to my knowledge — namely, that an English laddie, instead of supping parritch, would inevitably require a rump-steak to his breakfast! My next essay was more successful; and ended in my being regularly installed in a boarding-house, kept by a Scotchwoman, who was not so sure of my being a beefeater. She was a sort of widow, with a seafaring husband "as good as dead," and in her appearance not unlike a personification of *rouge et noir*, with her red eyes, her red face, her yellow teeth, and her black velvet cap. The first day of my term happened to be also the first day of the new year, and on stepping from my bed-room, I encountered our Hostess — like a witch and her familiar spirit — with a huge bottle of whiskey in one hand, and a glass in the other. It was impossible to decline the dram she pressed upon me, and very good it proved, and undoubtedly strong, seeing that for some time I could only muse its praise in expressive silence, and indeed, I was only able to speak with "a *small still* voice" for several minutes afterwards. Such was my characteristic introduction to the Land of Cakes, where I was destined to spend the greater part of two years, under circumstances likely to materially influence the coloring and filling up of my future life.

To properly estimate the dangers of my position, imagine a boy of fifteen, at the Nore, as it were, of life, thus left dependent on his own pilotage for a safe voyage to the Isle of Man; or conceive a juvenile Telemachus, without a Mentor, brought suddenly into the perilous neighborhood of Calypso and her enchantments. It will hardly be expected, that from some half-dozen of young bachelors, there came forth any solemn voice didactically warning me in the strain of the sage Imlac to the Prince of Abyssinia. In fact, I recollect receiving but one solitary serious admonition, and that was from a she-cousin of ten years old, that the Spectator I was reading on a Sunday morning, "was no the Bible." For there was still much of this pious rigor extant in Scotland, though a gentleman was no longer committed to Tolboothia Infelix, for an unseasonable promenade during church-time. It was once, however, my fortune to witness a sample of the *ancien régime* at an evening party composed chiefly of young and rather fashiona-

ble persons, when lo! like an Anachronism confounding times past with times present, there came out of some corner an antique figure, with quaintly-cut blue suit and three-cornered hat, not unlike a very old Greenwich Pensioner, who taking his stand in front of the circle, deliberately asked a blessing of formidable length on the thin bread and butter, the short-cake, the marmalade, and the Pekoe tea. And here, *en passant*, it may be worth while to remark, for the benefit of our Agnews and Plumtres, as illustrating the intrinsic value of such sanctimonious pretension, that the elder Scotland, so renowned for armlong graces, and redundant preachments, and abundant psalm-singing, has yet bequeathed to posterity a singularly liberal collection of songs, the reverie of Divine and Moral, such as "can only be sung when the punch-bowl has done its work and the wild wit is set free." *

To return to my boarding-house, which, with all its chairs, had none appropriated to a Professor of Moral Philosophy. In the absence of such a monitor, nature, fortunately for myself, had gifted me with a taste for reading, which the languor of ill-health, inclining me to sedentary habits, helped materially to encourage. Whatever books, good, bad, or indifferent, happened to come within my reach, were perused with the greatest avidity, and however indiscriminate the course, the balance of the impressions thence derived was decidedly in favor of the allegorical lady, so wisely preferred by Hercules when he had to make his election between Virtue and Vice. Of the material that ministered to this appetite, I shall always regret that I did not secure, as a literary curiosity — a collection of halfpenny Ballads, the property of a Grocer's apprentice, and which contained, amongst other matters, a new version of Chevy Chase, wherein the victory was transferred to the Scots. In the mean time, this bookishness acquired for me a sort of reputation for scholarship amongst my comrades, and in consequence my pen was sometimes called into requisition, in divers and sometimes delicate cases. Thus for one party, whom the Gods had not made poetical, I composed a love-letter in verse; for another, whose education had been neglected, I carried on a correspondence with reference to a tobacco manufactory in which he was a sleeping partner; whilst, on a graver occasion, the hand now peacefully setting

* A. Cunningham.

down these reminiscences was employed in penning a most horrible peremptory invitation to pistols and twelve paces, till one was nicked. The facts were briefly these. A spicy-tempered captain of Artillery, in a dispute with a superior officer, had rashly cashiered himself by either throwing up or tearing up his commission. In this dilemma he arrived at Dundee, to assume a post in the Customs, which had been procured for him by the interest of his friends. To his infinite indignation, however, he found that, instead of a lucrative surveyorship, he had been appointed a simple tide-waiter! and magnificent was the rage with which he tore, trampled. and danced on the little official paper-book wherein he had been set to tick off, bale by bale, a cargo of "infernal hemp." Unluckily, on the very day of this revelation, a forgery was perpetrated on the local Bank, and those sapient Dogberries, the town officers, saw fit to take up our persecuted ex-captain, on the simple ground that he was the last stranger who had entered the town. Rendered almost frantic by this second insult, nothing would serve him in his paroxysm but calling somebody out, and he pitched at once on the cashier of the defrauded Bank. As the state of his nerves would not permit him to write, he entreated me earnestly to draw up a defiance, which I performed, at the expense of an agony of suppressed laughter, merely to imagine the effect of such a missive on the man of business — a respectable powdered, bald, pudgy, pacific little body, with no more idea of "going out" than a cow in a field of clover. I forget the precise result — but certainly there was no duel.

SON AND SHADE.

LITERARY REMINISCENCES.

No. II.

To do justice to the climate of "stout and original Scotland," it promised to act kindly by the constitution committed to its care. The air evidently agreed with the natives; and auld Robin Grays and John Andersons were plenty as blackberries, and auld Lang Syne himself seemed to walk, bonneted amongst these patriarchal figures in the likeness of an old man covered with a mantle. The effect on myself was rather curious — for I seemed to have come amongst a generation that scarcely belonged to my era; mature spinsters, waning bachelors, very motherly matrons, and experienced fathers, that I should set down as uncles and aunts, called themselves my cousins; reverend personages, apparently grandfathers and grandmothers, were simply great-uncles and aunts: and finally I enjoyed an interview with a relative oftener heard of traditionally, than encountered in the body — a great-great-grandmother — still a tall woman and a tolerable pedestrian, going indeed down the hill, but with the wheel well locked. It was like coming amongst the Struldbrugs; and truly, for any knowledge to the contrary, many of these Old Mortalities are still living, enjoying their sneeshing, their toddy, their cracks, and particular reminiscences. The very phrase of being "Scotched, but not killed," seems to refer to this Caledonian tenacity of life, of which the well-known Walking Stewart was an example: he was an annuitant in the County-office, and, as the actuaries would say, died very hard. It must be difficult for the teatotallers to reconcile this longevity with the imputed enormous consumption of ardent spirits beyond the Tweed. Scotia, according to the evidence of Mr. Buckingham's committee, is an especially drouthie bodie, who drinks whiskey at christenings, and at buryings, and on all possible occasions besides. Her sons drink not by the hour or by the day, but by the week, — witness Souter Johnny: —

> "Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither,
> They had been fou for weeks thegither."

Swallowing no thin washy potation, but a strong overproof spirit, with a smack of smoke — and "where there is smoke there is fire," yet without flashing off, according to temperance theories, by spontaneous combustion. On the contrary, the canny northerns are noted for soundness of constitution and clearness of head, with such a strong principle of vitality as to justify the poetical prediction of C***, that the world's longest liver, or Last Man, will be a Scotchman.

All these favorable signs I duly noted; and prophetically refrained from delivering the letter of introduction to Doctor C——, which was to place me under his medical care. As the sick man said, when he went into the gin-shop instead of the hospital, I "trusted to natur." Whenever the weather permitted, therefore, which was generally when there were no new books to the fore, I haunted the banks and braes, or paid flying visits to the burns, with a rod intended to punish that rising generation amongst fishes called trout. But I whipped in vain. Trout there were in plenty, but like obstinate double teeth, with a bad operator, they would neither be pulled out nor come out of themselves. Still the sport, if so it might be called, had its own attractions, as, the catching excepted, the whole of the Waltonish enjoyments were at my command, the contemplative quiet, the sweet wholesome country air, and the picturesque scenery — not to forget the relishing the homely repast at the shealing or the mill; sometimes I went alone, but often we were a company, and then we had for our attendant a journeyman tobacco-spinner, an original, and literary withal, for he had a reel in his head, whence ever and anon he unwound a line of Allan Ramsay, or Beattie, or Burns. Methinks I still listen, trudging homewards in the gloaming, to the recitation of that appropriate stanza, beginning —

"At the close of the day when the hamlet was still,"

delivered with a gusto perhaps only to be felt by a day-laboring mechanic, who had "nothing but his evenings to himself." Methinks I still sympathize with the zest with which he dwelt on the pastoral images and dreams so rarely realized, when a chance holiday gave him the fresh-breathing fragrance of the living flower in lieu of the stale odor of the Indian weed: and philosophically I can now understand why poetry, with its lofty aspirations and sublimed feelings, seemed to sound so

gratefully to the ear from the lips of a "squire of low degree." There is something painful and humiliating to humanity in the abjectness of mind, that too often accompanies the sordid condition of the working-classes; whereas it is soothing and consolatory to find the mind of the poor man rising superior to his estate, and compensating by intellectual enjoyment for the physical pains and privation that belong to his humble lot. Whatever raises him above the level of the ox in the garner, or the horse in the mill, ought to be acceptable to the pride, if not to the charity, of the fellow-creature that calls him brother; for instance, music and dancing, but against which innocent unbendings some of our magistracy persist in setting their faces, as if resolved that a low neighborhood should enjoy no dance but St. Vitus's, and no fiddle but the Scotch.

To these open-air pursuits, sailing was afterwards added, bringing me acquainted with the boatmen and fishermen of The Craig, a hardy race, rough and ready-witted, from whom perchance was first derived my partiality for all marine bipeds and sea-craft, from Flag Admirals down to Jack Junk, the proud first-rate to the humble boatie that "wins the bairns' bread." The Tay at Dundee is a broad, noble river, with a racing tide, which, when it differs with a contrary wind, will get up "*jars*" (Anglicè waves) quite equal to those of a family manufacture. It was at least a good preparatory school for learning the rudiments of boat craft; whereof I acquired enough to be able at need to take the helm without either going too near the wind or too distant from the port. Not without some boyish pride I occasionally found myself intrusted with the guidance of the Coach-Boat — so called from its carrying the passengers by the Edinburgh Mail — particularly in a calm, when the utmost exertions of the crew, four old man-of-war's-men, were required at the oars. It not unfrequently happened, however, that "the laddie" was unceremoniously ousted by the unanimous vote, and sometimes by the united strength, of the ladies, who invariably pitched upon the oldest old gentleman in the vessel to

"*Steer* her up and haud her gaun."

The consequence being the landing with all the baggage, some half-mile above or below the town — and a too late conviction, that the *Elder* Brethren of our Trinity House were not the best Pilots.

It was during one of these brief voyages, that I witnessed a serio-comic accident, at which the reader will smile or sigh according to his connection with the Corporation of London. I forget on what unconscious pilgrimage it was bound, but amongst the other passengers one day, there was that stock-dove of a gourmand's affection, a fine lively turtle. Rich and rare as it was, it did not travel unprotected like Moore's heroine, but was under the care of a vigilant guardian, who seemed as jealous of the eyes that looked amorously at his charge, as if the latter had been a ward in Chancery. So far — namely, as far as the middle of the Tay — so good; when the spirit of mischief, or curiosity, or humanity, suggested the convenience of a sea-bath, and the refreshment the creature might derive from a taste of its native element. Accordingly, Testudo was lifted over the side, and indulged with a dip and a wallop in the wave, which actually revived it so powerfully, that from a playful flapping with its fore-fins it soon began to struggle most vigorously, like a giant refreshed with brine. In fact, it paddled with a power which, added to its weight, left no alternative to its guardian but to go with it, or without it. The event soon came off. The man tumbled backward into the boat, and the turtle plunged forward into the deep. There was a splash — a momentary glimpse of the broad back-shell — the waters closed, and all was over — or at least under! In vain one of the boatmen aimed a lunge with his boat-hook, at the fatal spot in particular — in vain another made a blow with his oar at the Tay in general — whilst a third, in his confusion, heaved a coil of rope, as he would, could, should, might, or ought to have done to a drowning Christian. The Amphibious was beyond their reach, and no doubt, making westward and homeward with all its might, with an instinctive feeling that

> "The world was all before it where to choose
> Its place of rest, and Providence its guide."

Never shall I forget, whilst capable of reminiscences, the face of that mourning mate thus suddenly bereaved of his turtle! The unfortunate shepherd, Ding-dong, in Rabelais, could hardly have looked more utterly and unutterly dozed, crazed, mizmazed, and flabbergasted, when his whole flock and stock of golden-fleeced sheep suicidically sheepwashed

themselves to death, by wilfully leaping overboard! He said little in words, but more eloquently clapped his hands to his waistcoat, as if the loss, as the nurses say, had literally "flown to his stomach." And truly, after promising it both callipash and callipee, with the delicious green fat to boot, what cold comfort could well be colder than the miserable chilling reflection that there was

"Cauld kail in Aberdeen?"

LITERARY REMINISCENCES.

No. III.

My first acquaintance with the press — a memorable event in an author's experience — took place in Scotland. Amongst the temporary sojourners at our boarding-house, there came a legal antiquarian who had been sent for from Edinburgh, expressly to make some unprofitable researches amongst the mustiest of the civic records. It was my humor to think, that, in Political as well as Domestic Economy, it must be better to sweep the Present than to dust the Past; and certain new brooms were recommended to the Town Council in a quizzing letter, which the then editor of the Dundee Advertiser or Chronicle thought fit to favor with a prominent place in his columns. "'T is pleasant sure," sings Lord Byron, "to see one's self in print," and according to the popular notion I ought to have been quite up in my stirrups, if not standing on the saddle, at thus seeing myself, for the first strange time, set up in type. Memory recalls, however, but a very moderate share of exaltation, which was totally eclipsed, moreover, by the exuberant transports of an accessory before the fact, whom, methinks, I still see in my mind's eye rushing out of the printing-office with the wet sheet steaming in his hand, and fluttering all along the High Street, to announce breathlessly that "we were in." But G. was an indifferent scholar, even in English, and therefore thought the more highly of this literary feat. It was this defective education,

and the want of a proper vent for his abundant love nonsense in prose or verse, that probably led to the wound he subsequently inflicted on his own throat, but which was luckily remedied by "a stitch in time." The failure of a tragedy is very apt to produce something like a comedy, and few afterpieces have amused me more than the behavior of this Amicus Redivivus, when, thus dramatizing the saying of "cut and come again," he made what ought to have been a posthumous appearance amongst his friends. In fact, and he was ludicrously alive to it, he had placed himself for all his supplementary days in a false position. Like the old man in the fable, after formally calling upon Death to execute a general release, he had quietly resumed his fardel, which he bore about, with exactly the uneasy, ridiculous air of a would-be fine gentleman, who is sensitively conscious that he is carrying a bundle. For the sake of our native sentimentalists who profess dying for love, as well as the foreign romanticists who affect a love for dying, it may not be amiss to give a slight sketch of the bearing of a traveller who had gone through half the journey. I had been absent some months, and was consequently ignorant of the affair, when lo! on my return to the town, the very first person who accosted me in the marketplace was our *felo-de-se*; and truly, no Bashful Man, "with all his blushing honors thick upon him," in the presence of a damp stranger, could have been more divertingly sheepish, and awkwardly backward in coming forward as to manner and address. Indeed, something of the embarrassment of a fresh introduction might naturally be felt by an individual, thus beginning again, as the lawyers say, *de novo*, and renewing ties he had virtually cast off. The guilty hand was as dubiously extended to me as if it had been a dyer's, — its fellow meanwhile performing sundry involuntary motions and manipulations about his cravat, as if nervously mistrusting the correctness of the ties or the stability of a buckle. As for his face, there was a foolish, deprecatory smile upon it that would have puzzled the pencil of Wilkie; and even Liston himself could scarcely have parodied the indescribable croak with which, conscious of an unlucky notoriety, he inquired "if I had heard" — here, a short husky cough — "of anything particular.

"Not a word," was the answer.

"Then you don't know"— (more fidgeting about the neck, the smile rather sillier, the voice more guttural, and the cough worse than ever) — "then you don't know" — but, like Macbeth's amen, the confession literally stuck in the culprit's throat; and I was left to learn an hour afterwards, and from another source, that "Jemmy G * * * had *fought a duel with himself*, and cut his own weazand, about a lady."

For my own part, with the above figure, and all its foolish features vividly imprinted on my memory, I do not think that I could ever seriously attempt "what Cato did, and Addison approved," in my own person. On the contrary, it seems to me that the English moralist gave but an Irish illustration of "a brave man struggling with the storms of fate," by representing him as wilfully scuttling his own hold, and going at once to the bottom. As for the Censor, he plainly laid himself open to censure, when he used a naked sword as a stomachic — a very sorry way, by the way, when weary of conjectures, of enjoying the benefit of the doubt, and for which, were I tasked to select an inscription for his cenotaph, it should be the exclamation of Thisby, in the Midsummer Night's Dream,—

"This is old Ninny's tomb."

Mais revenons à nos moutons, as the wolf said to her cubs. The reception of my letter in the Dublin Newspaper encouraged me to forward a contribution to the Dundee Magazine, the Editor of which was kind enough, as Winifred Jenkins says, to "wrap my bit of nonsense under his Honor's Kiver," without charging anything for its insertion. Here was success sufficient to turn a young author at once into "a scribbling miller," and make him sell himself, body and soul, after the German fashion, to that minor Mephistophiles, the Printer's Devil! Nevertheless, it was not till years afterwards, and the lapse of term equal to an ordinary apprenticeship, that the Imp in question became really my Familiar. In the mean time, I continued to compose occasionally, and, like the literary performances of Mr. Weller, Senior, my lucubrations were generally committed to paper, not in what is commonly called written hand, but an imitation of print. Such a course hints suspiciously of type and antetype, and a longing eye to the Row, whereas, it was adopted simply to make the reading

more easy, and thus enable me the more readily to form a judgment of the effect of my little efforts. It is more difficult than may be supposed to decide on the value of a work in MS., and especially when the handwriting presents only a swell mob of bad characters, that must be severally examined and re-examined to arrive at the merits or demerits of the case. Print settles it, as Coleridge used to say; and to be candid, I have more than once reversed, or greatly modified a previous verdict, on seeing a rough proof from the press. But, as Editors too well know, it is next to impossible to retain the tune of a stanza, or the drift of an argument, whilst the mind has to scramble through a patch of scribble-scrabble, as stiff as a gorse cover. The beauties of the piece will as naturally appear to disadvantage through such a medium, as the features of a pretty woman through a bad pane of glass; and without doubt, many a tolerable article has been consigned hand over head to the Balaam Box for want of a fair copy. Wherefore, O ye Poets and Prosers, who aspire to write in Miscellanies, and above all, O ye palpitating Untried, who meditate the offer of your maiden essays, to established periodicals, take care, pray ye take care, to cultivate a good, plain, bold, round text. Set up Tompkins as well as Pope and Dryden for a model, and have an eye to your pothooks. Some persons hold that the best writers are those who write the best hands, and I have known the conductor of a magazine to be converted by a crabbed MS. to the same opinion. Of all things, therefore, be legible; and to that end, practice in penmanship. If you have never learned, take six lessons of Mr. Carstairs. Be sure to buy the best paper, the best ink, the best pens, and then sit down and do the best you can; as the schoolboys do — put out your tongue, and take pains. So shall ye haply escape the rash rejection of a jaded editor; so, having got in your hand, it is possible that your head may follow; and so, last not least, ye may fortunately avert those awful mistakes of the press which sometimes ruin a poet's sublimest effusion, by pantomimically transforming his roses into noses, his angels into angles, and all his happiness into pappiness.

LITERARY REMINISCENCES.

No. IV.

"And are ye sure the news is true?
And are ye sure he 's weel?" — OLD SCOTCH SONG.

THE great Doctor Johnson — himself a sufferer — has pathetically described, in an essay on the miseries of an infirm constitution, the melancholy case of an Invalid, with a willing mind in a weak body. "The time of such a man," he says, "is spent in forming schemes which a change of wind prevents him from executing; his powers fume away in projects and in hope, and the day of action never arrives. He lies down delighted with the thoughts of to-morrow; but in the night the skies are overcast; the temper of the air is changed; he wakes in languor, impatience, and distraction; and has no longer any wish but for ease, nor any attention but for misery." In short, the Rambler describes the whole race of Valetudinarians as a sort of great Bitumen Company, paving a certain nameless place, as some of the Asphalticals have paved Oxford Street, with not very durable good intentions. In a word, your Invalid promises like a Hogmy, and performs like a Pigmy.

To a hale, hearty man, a perfect picture of health in an oaken frame, such abortions seem sufficiently unaccountable. A great hulking fellow, revelling as De Quincey used emphatically to say, "in rude BOVINE health," — a voracious human animal, camel-stomached and iron-built, who could all but devour and digest himself like a Kilkenny cat, — can neither sympathize with nor understand those frequent failures and down-breakings which happen to beings not so fortunately gifted with indelicate constitutions. Such a half-horse, half-alligator monster cannot judge, like a *Puny* Judge, of a case of feebleness. The broad-chested cannot allow for the narrow-breasted; the robust for the no-bust. Nevertheless, even the stalwart may sometimes fall egregiously short of their own designs — as witness a case in point.

Amongst my fellow-passengers, on a late sea-voyage, there was one who attracted my especial attention. A glance at his face, another at his figure, a third at his costume, and a fourth at his paraphernalia, sufficed to detect his country: by his light hair, nubbly features, heavy frame, odd-colored dressing-gown, and the national meerschaum and gaudy tobacco-bag, he was undeniably a German. But, besides the everlasting pipe, he was provided with a sketching apparatus, an ample note-book, a gun, and a telescope; the whole being placed ready for immediate use. He had predetermined, no doubt, to record his German sentiments on first making acquaintance with the German Ocean; to sketch the picturesque craft he might encounter on its surface; to shoot his first sea-gull; and to catch a first glimpse of the shores of Albion, beyond the reach of the naked eye. But alas! all these intentions fell — if one may correctly say so with only sky and water — to the ground. He ate nothing — drank nothing — smoked nothing — drew nothing — wrote nothing — shot nothing — spied nothing — nay, he merely stared, but replied nothing to my friendly inquiry (I am ill at the German tongue and its pronunciation), "Wie befinden *sea-sick?*"

Now, my own case, gentle reader, has been precisely akin to that of our unfortunate Cousin German. Like him I have promised much, projected still more, and done little. Like him, too, I have been a sick man, though not at sea, but on shore — and in excuse of all that has been left undone, or delayed, with other Performers, when they do not perform, I must proffer the old theatrical plea of indisposition. As the Rambler describes, I have erected schemes which have been blown down by an *ill* wind; I have formed plans, and been weather-beaten, like another Murphy, by a change in the weather. For instance, the Comic Annual for 1839 ought properly to have been published some forty days earlier; but was obliged, as it were, to perform quarantine, for want of a clean Bill of Health. Thus, too, the patron of the present Work who has taken the trouble to peruse certain chapters under the title of Literary Reminiscences, will doubtless have compared the tone of them with an Apology in Number Six, wherein, declining any attempt at an Auto-biography, a promise was made of giving such anecdotes as a bad memory and a bad hearing might have retained of my literary friends

and acquaintance. Hitherto, however, the fragments in question have only presented desultory glimpses of a goose-quill still in its green-gosling-hood, instead of any recollections of "celebrated pens." The truth is that my malady forced me to temporize: — wherefore the kind reader will be pleased to consider the aforesaid chapters but as so many "false starts," and that Memory has only now got away, to make play as well as she can.

Whilst I am thus closeted in the Confessional, it may be as well, as the Pelican said, to make a clean breast of it, and at once plead guilty to all those counts — and some from long-standing have become very Old Baily counts — that haunt my conscience. The most numerous of these crimes relate to letters that would not, could not, or at least did not answer. Others refer to the receipt of books, and as an example of their heinousness it misgives me that I was favored with a little volume by W. and M. Howitt, without ever telling them *how-it* pleased me. A few offences concern engagements which it was impossible to fulfil, although doubly bound by principle and interest. Seriously I have perforce been guilty of many, many, and still many sins of omission: but Hope, reviving with my strength, promises, granting me life, to redeem all such pledges. In the mean time, in extenuation, I can only plead particularly that deprecation which is offered up, in behalf of all Christian defaulters every Sunday, — "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, — *And there is no* HEALTH *in us.*"

It is pleasant after a match at Chess, particularly if we have won, to try back, and reconsider those important moves which have had a decisive influence on the result. It is still more interesting, in the game of Life, to recall the critical positions which have occurred during its progress, and review the false or judicious steps that have led to our subsequent good or ill fortune. There is, however, this difference, that chess is a matter of pure skill and calculation, whereas, the checkered board of human life is subject to the caprice of Chance — the event being sometimes determined by combinations which never entered into the mind of the player.* To

* To borrow an example from fiction, there is that slave of circumstances, Oliver Twist. There are few authors whom one would care to see running two heats with the same horse. It is intended therefore as a com-

such an accident it is perhaps attributable that the hand now tracing these reminiscences is holding a pen instead of an etching-point; jotting down these prose pleasures of memory, in lieu of furnishing articles "plated-on-steel," for the pictorial periodicals.

It will be remembered that my mental constitution, however weak my physical one, was proof against that type-us fever which parches most scribblers till they are set up, done up, and maybe, cut up, in print and boards. Perhaps I had read, and trembled at the melancholy annals of those unfortunates who, rashly undertaking to write for bread, had poisoned themselves, like Chatterton, for want of it, or choked themselves, like Otway, on obtaining it. Possibly, having learned to think humbly of myself — there is nothing like early sickness and sorrow for "taking the conceit" out of one — my vanity did not presume to think, with certain juvenile Tracticians, that I "had a call" to hold forth in print for the edification of mankind. Perchance, the very deep reverence my reading had led me to entertain for our Bards and Sages, deterred me from thrusting myself into the fellowship of Beings that seemed only a little lower than the angels. However, in spite of that very common excuse for publication, "the advice of a friend," who seriously recommended the submitting of my MSS. to a literary authority, with a view to his imprimatur, my slight acquaintance with the press was pushed no farther. On the contrary, I had selected a branch of the Fine Arts for my serious pursuit. Prudence, the daughter of Wisdom, whispering perhaps, that the engraver, Pye, had a better chance of a beefsteak inside, than Pye the Laureate; not that the verse-spinning was quite given up. Though working in *aqua fortis*, I still played with Castaly, now writing — all monkeys are imitators, and all young authors are monkeys — now writing a Bandit, to match the Corsair, and anon, hatching a Lalla Crow, by way of companion to Lalla Rookh. Moreover, about this time, I became a member of a private select Literary Society,* (alluded to at page 97 of the present work,) that "waited on Ladies and

pliment, that I wish Boz would re-write the history in question from page 122, supposing his hero NOT to have met with the Artful Dodger on his road to seek his fortune.

* The Elland Meeting, *ante*, page 188.

Gentlemen at their own houses." Our Minerva, allegorically speaking, was a motley personage, in blue stockings, a flounced gown, quaker cap, and kerchief, French flowers, and a man's hat. She held a fan in one hand, and a blowpipe in the other. Her votaries were of both sexes, old and young, married and single, assenters, dissenters, High Church, Low Church, No Church; Doctors in Physics, and Apothecaries in Metaphysics; dabblers in Logic, Chemistry, Casuistry, Sophistry, natural and unnatural History, Phrenology, Geology, Conchology, Demonology; in short, all kinds of Colledgy-Knowledgy-Ology, including "Cakeology," and tea and coffee. Like other Societies, we had our President — a sort of Speaker who never spoke; at least within my experience he never unbosomed himself of anything but a portentous shirt frill. According to the usual order of the entertainment, there was — first, Tea and Small Talk; secondly, an original Essay, which should have been followed, thirdly, by a Discussion, or Great Talk; but nine times in ten, it chanced, or rather mumchanced, that, between those who did not know what to think, and others, who did not know how to deliver what they thought, there ensued a dead silence, so "very dead indeed," as Apollo Belvi says, that it seemed buried into the bargain. To make this awkward pause more awkward, some misgiving voice, between a whisper and a croak, would stammer out some allusion to a Quaker's Meeting, answered from right to left by a running titter, the speaker having innocently, or perhaps wilfully forgotten, that one or two friends in drab coats, and as many in slate-colored gowns, were sitting, thumb-twiddling, in the circle. Not that the Friends contented themselves with playing *dumby* at our discussions. They often spoke, and very characteristically, to the matter in hand. For instance, their favorite doctrine of non-resistance was once pushed — if Quakers ever push — a little "beyond beyond." By way of clencher, one fair, meek, sleek Quakeress, in dove-color, gravely told a melodramatical story of a conscientious Friend, who, rather than lift even his little finger against a Foe, passively, yea, lamb-like, suffered himself to be butchered in bed by an assassin, and died consistently, as he thought, with Fox principles, very like a Goose. As regards my own share in the Essays and Arguments, it misgives me that they no more satisfied our decidedly serious members,

than they now propitiate Mr. Rae Wilson. At least, one Society night, in escorting a female Fellow towards her home, she suddenly stopped me, taking advantage perhaps of the awful locality, and its associations, just in front of our chief criminal prison, and looking earnestly in my face, by the light of a Newgate lamp, inquired somewhat abruptly, "Mr. Hood! are you not an Infidel?" *

In the mean time, whilst thus playing at Literature, an event was ripening which was to introduce me to Authorship in earnest, and make the Muse, with whom I had only flirted, my companion for life. It had often occurred to me that a striking, romantical, necromantical, metaphysical, melodramatical, Germanish story, might be composed, the interest of which should turn on the mysterious influence of the fate of A over the destiny of B, the said parties having no more natural or apparent connection with each other than Tenterden Steeple and the Goodwin Sands. An instance of this occult contingency occurred in my own case; for I did not even know by sight the unfortunate gentleman on whose untimely exit depended my entrance on the literary stage. In the beginning of the year 1821, a memorable duel, originating in a pen-and-ink quarrel, took place at Chalk Farm, and terminated in the death of Mr. John Scott, the able Editor of the London Magazine.† The melancholy result excited great interest, in which I fully participated, little dreaming that his catastrophe involved any consequences of importance to myself. But on the loss of its conductor, the Periodical passed into other hands. The new Proprietors were my friends; they sent for me, and after some preliminaries, I was duly installed as a sort of sub-Editor of the London Magazine.

It would be affectation to say that engraving was resigned with regret. There is always something mechanical about the art — moreover, it is as unwholesome as wearisome to sit copper-fastened to a board, with a cantle scooped out to accommodate your stomach, if you have one, painfully ruling, ruling, and still ruling lines straight or crooked, by the long hundred to the square inch, at the doubly-hazardous risk

* In justice to the Society, it ought to be recorded, that two of its members have since distinguished themselves in print: the authoress of "London in the Olden Time," and the author of a "History of Moral Science."

† See Appendix, (A.)

which Wordsworth so deprecates, of "growing double." So farewell Woollett! Strange! Bartolozzi! I have said, my vanity did not rashly plunge me into authorship; but no sooner was there a legitimate opening than I jumped at it, *à la* Grimaldi, headforemost, and was speedily behind the scenes.

To judge by my zeal and delight in my new pursuit, the bowl had at last found its natural bias.* Not content with taking articles, like candidates for holy orders — with rejecting articles like the Belgians — I dreamt articles, thought articles, wrote articles, which were all inserted by the editor, of course with the concurrence of his deputy. The more irksome parts of authorship, such as the correction of the press, were to me labors of love. I received a revise from Mr. Baldwin's Mr. Parker, as if it had been a proof of his regard; forgave him all his slips, and really thought that printers' devils were not so black as they are painted. But my top-gallant glory was in "our Contributors!" How I used to look forward to Elia! and backward for Hazlitt, and all round for Edward Herbert, and how I used to *look up* to Allan Cunningham! for at that time the London had a goodly list of writers — a rare company. It is now defunct, and perhaps no ex-periodical might so appropriately be apostrophized with the Irish funereal question — "Arrah, honey, why did you die?" Had you not an editor, and elegant prose writers, and beautiful poets, and broths of boys for criticism and classics, and wits and humorists, — Elia, Cary, Procter, Cunningham, Bowring, Barton, Hazlitt, Elton, Hartley Coleridge, Talfourd, Soane, Horace Smith, Reynolds, Poole, Clare, and Thomas Benyon, with a power besides? † Had n't you Lions' Heads with Traditional Tales? Had n't you an Opium Eater, and a Dwarf, and a Giant, and a Learned Lamb, and

* There was a dash of ink in my blood. My father wrote two novels, and my brother was decidedly of a literary turn, to the great disquietude for a time of an anxious parent. She suspected him, on the strength of several amatory poems of a very desponding cast, of being the victim of a hopeless attachment; so he was caught, closeted, and catechised, and after a deal of delicate and tender sounding, he confessed, not with the anticipated sighs and tears, but a very unexpected burst of laughter, that he had been guilty of translating some fragments of Petrarch.

† In this list, the name of one of the most frequent and vivacious contributors to the *London* is omitted. For the story of this writer, which explains the omission, see Appendix, (B).

a Green Man? Had you not a regular Drama, and a Musical Report, and a Report of Agriculture, and an Obituary and a Price Current, and a current price of only half-a-crown? Arrah, why did you die? Why, somehow the contributors fell away — the concern went into other hands — worst of all, a new editor tried to put the Belles Lettres in Utilitarian envelopes; whereupon, the circulation of the Miscellany, like that of poor Le Fevre, got slower, slower, slower, — and slower still — and then stopped forever! It was a sorry scattering of those old Londoners! Some went out of the country: one (Clare) went into it. Lamb retreated to Colebrooke. Mr. Cary presented himself to the British Museum. Reynolds and Barry took to engrossing when they should pen a stanza, and Thomas Benyon gave up literature.

It is with mingled feelings of pride, pleasure, and pain, that I revert to those old times, when the writers I had long known and admired in spirit were present to me in the flesh — when I had the delight of listening to their wit and wisdom from their own lips, of gazing on their faces, and grasping their right hands. Familiar figures rise before me, familiar voices ring in my ears, and alas! amongst them are shapes that I must never see, sounds that I can never hear, again. Before my departure from England, I was one of the few who saw the grave close over the remains of one whom to know as a friend was to love as a relation. Never did a better soul go to a better world! Never perhaps (giving the lie direct to the common imputation of envy, malice, and hatred, amongst the brotherhood), never did an author descend — to quote his favorite Sir T. Browne — into "the land of the mole and the pismire" so hung with golden opinions, and honored and regretted with such sincere eulogies and elegies, by his contemporaries. To HIM, the first of these, my reminiscences, is eminently due, for I lost in him not only a dear and kind friend, but an invaluable critic; one whom, were such literary adoptions in modern use, I might well name, as Cotton called Walton, my "father." To borrow the earnest language of old Jean Bertaut, as Englished by Mr. Cary —

> "Thou, chiefly, noble spirit, for whose loss
> Just grief and mourning all our hearts engross,
> Who seeing me devoted to the Nine,
> Didst hope some fruitage from those buds of mine;

Thou didst excite me after thee t' ascend
The Muses' sacred hill; nor only lend
Example, but inspirit me to reach
The far-off summit by thy friendly speech.

. . . . .

May gracious Heaven, O honor of our age!
Make the conclusion answer thy presage,
Nor let it only for vain fortune stand,
That I have seen thy visage — touched thy hand!"

I was sitting one morning beside our Editor, busily correcting proofs, when a visitor was announced, whose name, grumbled by a low ventriloquial voice, like Tom Pipes calling from the hold through the hatchway, did not resound distinctly on my tympanum. However, the door opened, and in came a stranger, — a figure remarkable at a glance, with a fine head, on a small spare body, supported by two almost immaterial legs. He was clothed in sables, of a by-gone fashion, but there was something wanting, or something present about him, that certified he was neither a divine, nor a physician, nor a schoolmaster: from a certain neatness and sobriety in his dress, coupled with his sedate bearing, he might have been taken, but that such a costume would be anomalous, for a *Quaker* in black. He looked still more like (what he really was) a literary Modern Antique, a New Old Author, a living Anachronism, contemporary at once with Burton the Elder and Colman the Younger. Meanwhile he advanced with rather a peculiar gait, his walk was plantigrade, and with a cheerful "How d'ye," and one of the blandest, sweetest smiles that ever brightened a manly countenance, held out two fingers to the Editor. The two gentlemen in black soon fell into discourse; and whilst they conferred, the Lavater principle within me set to work upon the interesting specimen thus presented to its speculations. It was a striking intellectual face, full of wiry lines, physiognomical quips and cranks, that gave it great character. There was much earnestness about the brows, and a deal of speculation in the eyes, which were brown and bright, and "quick in turning;" the nose, a decided one, though of no established order; and there was a handsome smartness about the mouth. Altogether it was no common face — none of those *willow-pattern* ones, which Nature turns out by thousands at her potteries; — but more like a chance specimen of the Chinese ware, one to the set — unique,

antique, quaint. No one who had once seen it could pretend not to know it again. It was no face to lend its countenance to any confusion of persons in a Comedy of Errors. You might have sworn to it piecemeal, — a separate affidavit for every feature. In short, his face was as original as his figure; his figure as his character; his character as his writings; his writings the most original of the age. After the literary business had been settled, the Editor invited his contributor to dinner, adding "we shall have a hare —"

"And — and — and — and many Friends!"

The hesitation in the speech, and the readiness of the illusion, were alike characteristic of the individual, whom his familiars will perchance have recognized already as the delightful Essayist, the capital Critic, the pleasant Wit and Humorist, the delicate-minded and large-hearted Charles Lamb! He was shy like myself with strangers, so that despite my yearnings, our first meeting scarcely amounted to an introduction. We were both at dinner, amongst the hare's many friends, but our acquaintance got no farther, in spite of a desperate attempt on my part to attract his notice. His complaint of the Decay of Beggars presented another chance: I wrote on coarse paper, and in ragged English, a letter of thanks to him as if from one of his mendicant clients, but it produced no effect. I had given up all hopes, when one night, sitting sick and sad, in my bed-room, racked with the rheumatism, the door was suddenly opened, the well-known quaint figure in black walked in without any formality, and with a cheerful "Well, boy, how are you?" and the bland, sweet smile, extended the two fingers. They were eagerly clutched of course, and from that hour we were firm friends.

Thus characteristically commenced my intimacy with C. Lamb. He had recently become my neighbor, and in a few days called again, to ask me to tea, "to meet Wordsworth." In spite of any idle jests to the contrary, the name had a spell in it that drew me to Colebrooke Cottage* with more alacri-

* A cottage of Ungentility, for it had neither double coach-house nor wings. Like its tenant, it stood alone. He said, glancing at the Paternoster one, that he did not like "the Row." There was a bit of a garden, in which, being as he professed, "more fond of Men Sects than of Insects," he made probably his first and last observation in Entomology. He had been watching a spider on a gooseberry-bush, entrapping a fly. "Good

ty* than consisted with prudence, stiff joints, and a North wind. But I was willing to run, at least hobble, some risk, to be of a party in a parlor with the Author of Laodamia and Hartleap Well. As for his Betty Foy-bles, he is not the first man by many who has met with a *simple* fracture through riding his theory-hack so far and so fast, that it broke down with him. If he has now and then put on a nightcap, so have his own next-door mountains. If he has babbled, sometimes, like an infant of *two* years old; he has also thought, and felt, and spoken, the beautiful fancies, and tender affections, and artless language, of the children who can say "We are *seven*." Along with food for babes, he has furnished strong meat for men. So I put on my great-coat, and in a few minutes found myself, for the first time, at a door, that opened to me as frankly as its master's heart; for, without any preliminaries of hall, passage, or parlor, one single step across the threshold brought me into the sitting-room, and in sight of the domestic hearth. The room looked brown with "old bokes," and beside the fire sat Wordsworth, and his sister, the hospitable Elia, and the excellent Bridget. As for the bard of Rydal, his outward man did not, perhaps, disappoint one; but the *palaver*, as the Indians say, fell short of my anticipations. Perhaps my memory is in fault; 't was many years ago, and, unlike the biographer of Johnson, I have never made Bozziness my business. However, excepting a discussion on the value of the promissory-notes issued by our younger poets, wherein Wordsworth named Shelley, and Lamb took John Keats for choice, there was nothing of literary interest brought upon the carpet. But a book man cannot always be bookish. A poet, even a Rydal one, must be glad at times to descend from Saddleback, and feel his legs. He cannot, like a Girl in the Fairy Tale, be always talking diamonds and pearls. It is a "Vulgar Error" to suppose that an author must be always

God," he said, "I never saw such a thing! Directly he was caught in her fatal spinning, she darted down upon him, and in a minute turned him out, completely lapped in a shroud! It reminded me of the Fatal Sisters in Gray."

* A sort of rheumatic celerity, of which Sir W. Scott's favorite dramatizer seemed to have a very accurate notion. Those who remember "poor Terry's" deliberate delivery will be able to account for the shout of laughter which once rang throughout the Adelphi green-room, at his emphatic manner of giving, from a manuscript play, the stage direction of "Enter ——, with—a—lack—ri—ty!"

authoring, even with his feet on the fender. Nevertheless, it is not an uncommon impression, that a Writer sonnetizes his wife, sings odes to his children, talks essays and epigrams to his friends, and reviews his servants. It was in something of this spirit that an official gentleman to whom I mentioned the pleasant literary meetings at Lamb's, associated them instantly with his parochial mutual instruction evening schools, and remarked, "Yes, yes, all very proper and praiseworthy — of course, you go there *to improve your minds.*"

And very pleasant and improving, though not of set purpose, to both mind and heart, were those extempore assemblies at Colebrooke Cottage. It was wholesome for the soul but to breathe its atmosphere. It was a House of Call for All Denominations. *Sides* were lost in that *circle*, Men of all parties postponed their partisanship, and met as on a neutral ground. There were but two persons, whom L. avowedly did not wish to encounter beneath his roof, and those two, merely on account of private and family differences. For the rest, they left all their hostilities at the door, with their sticks. This forbearance was due to the truly tolerant spirit of the Host, which influenced all within its sphere. Lamb, whilst he willingly lent a crutch to halting Humility, took delight in tripping up the stilts of Pretension. Anybody might trot out his Hobby; but he allowed nobody to ride the High Horse. If it was a High German one like those ridden by the Devil and Doctor Faustus, he would chant

"Gëuty Gëuty
Is a great Beauty,"

till the rider moderated his gallop. He hated anything like Cock-of-the-Walk-ism; and set his face and his wit against all Ultraism, Transcendentalism, Sentimentalism, Conventional Mannerism, and above all, Separatism. In opposition to the Exclusives, he was emphatically an Inclusive.

As he once owned to me, he was fond of antagonizing. Indeed in the sketch of himself, prefacing the Last Essays of Elia — a sketch for its truth to have delighted Mason the Self-Knowledge man — he says, "with the Religionist I pass for a Free-thinker, while the other faction set me down for a Bigot." In fact, no politician ever labored more to preserve the Balance of Power in Europe, than he did to correct any

temporary preponderances. He was always *trimming* in the nautical, not in the political, sense. Thus in his "magnanimous letter," as Hazlitt called it, to High Church Southey, he professed himself a Unitarian.* With a Catholic he would probably have called himself a Jew; as amongst Quakers, by way of a set-off against their own formality, he would indulge in a little extra levity. I well remember his chuckling at having spirited on his correspondent Bernard Barton, to commit some little enormities, such as addressing him as C. Lamb, *Esquire.*

My visits at Lamb's were shortly interrupted by a sojourn to unrheumatize myself at Hastings; but in default of other intercourse I received a letter in a well-known hand, quaint as the sentences it conveyed.

"And what dost thou at the Priory? Cucullus non facit Monachum. English me that, and challenge old Lignum Janua to make it better.

My old New River has presented no extraordinary novelties lately. But there Hope sits day after day speculating upon traditionary gudgeons. I think she has taken the fisheries. I now know the reason why our forefathers were denominated East and West Angles. Yet is there no lack of spawn, for I wash my hands in fishets that come through the pump every morning, thick as motelings — little things that perish untimely, and never taste the brook. You do not tell me of those romantic Land Bays that be as thou goest to Lover's Seat, neither of that little Churchling in the midst of a wood, (in the opposite direction nine furlongs from the town,) that seems dropped by the Angel that was tired of carrying two packages; marry, with the other he made shift to pick his flight to Loretto. Inquire out and see my little Protestant Loretto. It stands apart from trace of human habitation, yet hath it pulpit, reading-desk, and trim font of massiest marble, as if Robinson Crusoe had reared it to soothe himself with old church-going images. I forget its Xtian name, and what She Saint was its gossip.

You should also go to No. 13 Standgate Street, a Baker, who has the finest collection of marine monsters in ten sea counties; sea-dragons, polypi, mer-people, most fantastic. You have only to name the old Gentleman in black (not the Devil), that lodged with

* As regards his Unitarianism, it strikes me as more probable that he was what the unco guid people call "Nothing at all," which means that he was everything but a Bigot. As he was in spirit an Old Author, so was he in faith an Ancient Christian, too ancient to belong to any of the modern sub-hubbub-divisions of — Ists, — Arians, and — Inians.

him a week (he 'll remember) last July, and he will show courtesy. He is by far the foremost of the Savans. His wife is the funniest thwarting little animal! They are decidedly the Lions of green Hastings. Well, I have made an end of my say; — my epistolary time is gone by when I could have scribbled as long (I will not say as agreeable) as thine was to both of us. I am dwindled to notes and letterets. But in good earnest I shall be most happy to hail thy return to the waters of old Sir Hugh. There is nothing like inland murmurs, fresh ripples, and our native minnows.

> He sang in meads how sweet the brooklets ran,
> To the rough ocean and red restless sands.

I design to give up smoking; but I have not yet fixed upon the equivalent vice. I must have quid pro quo, or quo pro *quid*, as Tom Woodgate would correct me. My service to him.

"C. L."

The letter came to hand too late for me to hunt the "Lions;" but on a subsequent visit to the same Cinque Port with my wife, though we verified the little Loretto, we could not find the Baker, or even his man, howbeit we tried at every shop that had the least sign of bakery or cakery in its window. The whole was a batch of *fancy* bread; one of those fictions which the writer was apt to pass off upon his friends.

The evening meetings at Colebrooke Cottage — where somebody, who *was* somebody, or a literary friend, was sure to drop in — were the more grateful to me, as the London Magazine was now in a rapid decline; some of its crack contributors had left it off, and the gatherings of the clan to eat, drink, and be merry were few and far between. There was indeed one Venison Feast whereat, I have heard, the scent lay more than breast high, and the sport was of as rich a quality; but it was my chance to be absent from the pack. At former dinners, however, I had been a guest, and a sketch of one of them may serve to introduce some of the principal characters of our "London in the Olden Time."

On the right hand then of the Editor 'sits Elia, of the pleasant smile, and the quick eyes — Procter said of them that "they looked as if they could pick up pins and needles" — and a wit as quick as his eyes, and sure, as Hazlitt described, to stammer out the best pun and the best remark in the course of the evening. Next to him, shining verdantly out from the grave-colored suits of the literati, like a patch of

turnips amidst stubble and fallow, behold our Jack i' the Green — John Clare! In his bright, grass-colored coat, and yellow waistcoat (there are greenish stalks too, under the table), he looks a very Cowslip, and blooms amongst us as Goldsmith must have done in his peach-blossom. No wonder the doorkeeper of the Soho Bazaar, seeing that *very countrified* suit, linked arm-in-arm with the Editorial sables, made a boggle at admitting them into his repository, having seen perchance, such a made-up Peasant "playing at playing" at thimble-rig about the Square. No wonder the gentleman's gentleman, in the drab-coat and sealing-wax smalls, at W——'s, was for cutting off our Green Man, who was modestly the last in ascending the stairs as an interloper, though he made amends afterwards by waiting almost exclusively on the Peasant, perfectly convinced that he was some eccentric Notable of the Corinthian order, disguised in Rustic. Little wonder either, that in wending homewards on the same occasion through the Strand, the Peasant and Elia, *Sylvanus et Urban*, linked comfortably together; there arose the frequent cry of "Look at Tom and Jerry — there goes Tom and Jerry!" for truly, Clare in his square-cut green coat, and Lamb in his black, were not a little suggestive of Hawthorn and Logic, in the plates to "Life in London."

But to return to the table. Elia — much more of House Lamb than of Grass Lamb — avowedly caring little or nothing for Pastoral; cottons, nevertheless, very kindly to the Northamptonshire Poet, and still more to his ale, pledging him again and again as "Clarissimus," and "Princely Clare," and sometimes so lustily, as to make the latter cast an anxious glance into his tankard. By his bright happy look, the Helpstone Visitor is inwardly contrasting the unlettered country company of Clod, and Hodge and Podge, with the delights of "London" society — Elia, and Barry, and Herbert, and Mr. Table Talk, *cum multis aliis* — i. e. a multiplicity of all. But besides the tankard, the two "drouthie neebors" discuss Poetry in general,* and Montgomery's "Common Lot" in particular, Lamb insisting on the beauty of the tangental

* Talking of Poetry, Lamb told me one day that he had just met with the most vigorous line he had ever read. "Where?" "Out of the Camden's Head, all in one line —

To One Hundred Pots of Porter . . . . £2 1 8."

sharp turn at "O! she was fair!" thinking, mayhap, of his own Alice W——, and Clara swearing "Dal!" (a clarified d—n) "Dal! if it is n't like a Dead Man preaching out of his coffin!" Anon, the Humorist begins to banter the Peasant on certain "Clare-obscurities" in his own verses, originating in a contempt for the rules of Prisician, whereupon the accused, thinking with Burns,

> "What ser'es their grammars?
> They 'd better ta'en up spades and shools,
> Or knappin hammers,"

vehemently denounces all Philology as nothing but a sort of man-trap for authors, and heartily dals Lindley Murray for "inventing it!"

It must have been at such a time, that Hilton *conceived* his clever portrait of C——, when he was "C in alt." He was hardy, rough, and clumsy enough to look truly rustic — like an Ingram's rustic chair. There was a slightness about his frame, with a delicacy of features and complexion, that associated him more with the Garden than with the Field, and made him look the Peasant of a Ferme Ornée. In this respect he was as much beneath the genuine stalwart bronzed Plough-Poet, Burns, as above the Farmer's Boy, whom I remember to have seen in my childhood, when he lived in a miniature house, near the Shepherd and Shepherdess, now the Eagle tavern, in the City Road, and manufactured Æolian harps, and kept ducks. The Suffolk Giles had very little of the agricultural in his appearance; he looked infinitely more like a handicraftsman, *town-made.*

Poor Clare! — It would greatly please me to hear that he was happy and well, and thriving; but the transplanting of Peasants and Farmers' Boys from the natural into an artificial soil does not always conduce to their happiness, or health, or ultimate well doing.* I trust the true Friends, who, with a natural hankering after poetry, because it is forbidden them, have ventured to pluck and eat of the pastoral sorts, as most dallying with the innocence of nature, — and who on that account patronized Capel Lofft's *protégé* — I do trust and hope they took off whole editions of the Northamptonshire Bard. There was much about Clare for a Quaker to like; he was tender-

* Hood's intimations that all might not be well with the rural poet will be understood by the sequel of his story. See Appendix, (C).

hearted, and averse to violence. How he recoiled once, bodily taking his chair along with him, from a young surgeon, or surgeon's friend, who let drop, somewhat abruptly, that he was just come "from seeing a child skinned!" — Clare, from his look of horror, evidently thought that the poor infant, like Marsyas, had been flayed *alive!* He was both gentle and simple. I have heard that on his first visit to London, his publishers considerately sent their porter to meet him at the inn; but when Thomas necessarily inquired of the gentleman in green, "Are you Mr. Clare?" the latter, willing to foil the traditionary tricks of London sharpers, replied to the suspicious query with "a positive negative."*

The Brobdignagdian next to Clare, overtopping him by the whole head and shoulders — a physical "Colossus of Literature," the granadier of our corps — is Allan, not Allan Ramsay, "no, nor Barbara Allan neither," but Allan Cunningham, — "a credit," quoth Sir Walter Scott (he might have said a long credit) "to Caledonia." He is often called "honest Allan," to distinguish him, perhaps, from one Allan-a-Dale, who was apt to mistake his neighbors' goods for his own — sometimes, between ourselves, yclept the "C. of Solway," in allusion to that favorite "Allan Water," the Solway Sea. There is something of the true moody poetical weather observable in the barometer of his face, alternating from Variable to Showery, from Stormy to Set Fair. At times he looks gloomy and earnest and traditional — a little like a Covenanter — but he suddenly clears up and laughs a hearty laugh that lifts him an inch or two from his chair, for he rises at a joke when he sees one, like a trout at a fly, and finishes with a smart rubbing of his ample palms. He has store, too, of broad Scotch stories, and shrewd sayings; and he writes — no, he wrote rare old-new or new-old ballads. Why not now? Has his Pegasus, as he once related of his pony, run from under him? Has the Mermaid of Galloway left no little ones? Is Bonnie Lady Ann married, or May Morison dead? Thou wast formed for a poet, Allan, by nature, and by stature too, according to Pope —

"To snatch a grace *beyond the reach* of Art."

* Somebody happened to say that the Peasant ought to figure in the Percy Anecdotes, as an example of uncultivated genius. "And where will they stick me," asked Clare; "will they stick me in the instinct?"

And are there not Longman, or Tallboys, for thy Publishers? But alas! we are fallen on evil days for Bards and Barding, and nine tailors do more for a man than the Nine Muses. The only Lay likely to answer now-a-days would be an Ode (with the proper testimonials) to the Literary Fund!

The Reverend personage on the Editor's right, with the studious brow, deep-set eyes, and bald crown, is the mild and modest Cary — the same who turned Dante into Miltonic English blank verse. He is sending his plate towards the partridges, which he will relish and digest as though they were the Birds of Aristophanes. He has his eye, too, on the French made-dishes.* Pity, shame and pity, such a Translator found no better translation in the Church! Is it possible that, in some no-popery panic, it was thought by merely being Dragoman to Purgatory he had *Romed* from the true faith?

A very pleasant day we "Londoners" once spent at a Chiswick parsonage, formerly tenanted by Hogarth, along with the hospitable Cary, and, as Elia called them, his Caryatides!† The last time my eyes rested on the Interpreter (of the House Beautiful as well as of the Inferno), he was on the Library steps of the British Museum. Ere this, I trust he hath reached the tiptop — nay, hath perhaps attained being a Literary Worthy, even unto a Trusteeship, and had to buy, at Ellis's, a few yards of the Blue Ribbon of Literature!

Proctor, — alias Barry Cornwall, formerly of the Marcian Colonnade, now of some prosaical Inn of Court — the kindly Proctor, one of the foremost to welcome me into the Brotherhood, with a too-flattering Dedication (another instance against the jealousy of authors), is my own left-hand file. But what he says shall be kept as strictly confidential; for he is whispering it into my Martineau ear. On my other side, when I turn that way, I see a profile, a shadow of which ever confronts me on opening my writing-desk, — a sketch taken from memory, the day after seeing the original.‡ In opposition to

* I once cut out from a country newspaper what seemed to me a very good old English poem. It proved to be a *naturalization*, by Cary, of a French Song to April, by Remy Belleau.

† The father expressing an uncertainty to what profession he should devote a younger Cary, Lamb said, "Make him an Apothe-Cary."

‡ Unable to make anything "like a likeness" of a sitter for the purpose, I have a sort of Irish faculty for taking faces behind their backs. But my

the "extra man's size" of Cunningham, the party in question looks almost boyish, partly from being in bulk somewhat beneath Monsieur Quetelet's "Average Man," but still more so from a peculiar delicacy of complexion and smallness of features, which look all the smaller from his wearing, in compliment, probably, to the *Sampsons* of Teutonic Literature, his locks unshorn. Nevertheless whoever looks again,

Sees more than marks the crowd of common men.

There is speculation in the eyes, a curl of the lip, and a general character in the outline, that reminds one of some portraits of Voltaire. And a Philosopher he is every inch. He looks, thinks, writes, talks and walks, eats and drinks, and no doubt sleeps philosophically — i. e. deliberately. There is nothing abrupt about his motions, — he goes and comes calmly and quietly — like the phantom in Hamlet, he is here — he is there — he is gone! So it is with his discourse. He speaks slowly, clearly, and with very marked emphasis, — the tide of talk flows like Denham's river, "strong without rage, without o'erflowing, full." When it was my frequent and agreeable duty to call on Mr. De Quincey (being an uncommon name to remember, the servant associated it, on the Memoria Technica principle, with a sore throat, and always pronounced it Quinsy), and I have found him at home, quite at home, in the midst of a German Ocean of *Literature*, in a storm, — flooding all the floor, the table and the chairs, — billows of books tossing, tumbling, surging open, — on such occasions I have willingly listened by the hour whilst the Philosopher, standing, with his eyes fixed on one side of the room, seemed to be less speaking than reading from a "handwriting on the wall." Now and then he would diverge, for a Scotch mile or two, to the right or left, till I was tempted to inquire with Peregrine in John Bull (Colman's, not Hook's), "Do you never deviate?" — but he always came safely back to the point where he had left, not lost the scent, and thence hunted his topic to the end. But look! — we are in the small hours, and a change comes o'er the spirit of that "old familiar face." A faint hectic tint

pencil has not been guilty of half the personalities attributed to it; amongst others, "a formidable likeness of a Lombard-Street Banker." Besides that one would rather draw on a Banker than at him, I have never seen the Gentleman alluded to, or even a portrait of him in my life.

leaves the cheek, the eyes are a degree dimmer, and each is surrounded by a growing shadow — signs of the waning influence of that Potent Drug whose stupendous Pleasures and enormous Pains have been so eloquently described by the English Opium-Eater. Marry, I have one of his Confessions with his own name and mark to it: — an apology for a certain stain on his MS., the said stain being a large purplish ring. "Within that circle none durst drink but he," — in fact the impression, colored, of "a tumbler of laudanum negus, warm, without sugar." *

That smart, active person opposite with a game-cock looking head, and the hair combed smooth, fighter-fashion, over his forehead — with one finger hooked round a glass of champagne, not that he requires it to inspirit him, for his wit bubbles up of itself — is our Edward Herbert, the Author of that true piece of Biography, the Life of Peter Corcoran. He is "good with both hands," like that Nonpareil Randall, at a comic verse or a serious stanza — smart at a repartee — sharp at a retort, — and not averse to a bit of mischief. 'T was he who gave the runaway ring at Wordsworth's Peter Bell.† Generally, his jests, set off by a happy manner, are only ticklesome, but now and then they are sharp-flavored, — like the sharpness of the pine-apple. Would I could give a sample. Alas! what a pity it is that so many good things uttered by Poets, and Wits, and Humorists, at chance times — and they are always the best and brightest, like sparks struck out by Pegasus's own hoof, in a curvet amongst the flints — should be daily and hourly lost to the world for want of a recorder! But in this Century of Inventions, when a self-acting drawing-paper has been discovered for copying visible objects, who knows but that a future Niepce, or Daguerre, or Herschel, or Fox Talbot, may find out some sort of Boswellish writing-paper to repeat whatever it hears!

* On a visit to Norfolk, I was much surprised to find that Opium, or Opie, as it was vulgarly called, was quite in common use in the form of pills amongst the lower classes, *in the vicinity of the Fens*. It is not probable that persons in such a rank of life had read the Confessions, — or, might not one suspect that, as Dennis Brulgruddery was driven to drink by the stale, flat, and unprofitable prospects of Muckslush Heath, so the Fen-People in the dreary, foggy, cloggy, boggy wastes of Cambridge and Lincolnshire had flown to the Drug for the sake of the magnificent *scenery* that filled the splendid visions of its Historian?

† See Talfourd's Final Memorials of Lamb, and Appendix, (D).

There are other Contributors — poor Hazlitt, for instance — whose shades rise up before me: but I never met with them at the Entertainments just described. Shall we ever meet anywhere again? Alas, some are dead; and the rest dispersed; and the days of *Social* Clubs are over and gone, when the Professors and Patrons of Literature assembled round the same steaming bowl, and Johnson, always best out of print, exclaimed, "Lads! who 's for Poonch!"

* * * * *

Amongst other notable men who came to Colebrooke Cottage, I had twice the good fortune of meeting with S. T. Coleridge. The first time he came from Highgate with Mrs. Gilman, to dine with "Charles and Mary." What a contrast to Lamb was the full-bodied Poet, with his waving white hair, and his face round, ruddy, and unfurrowed as a holy Friar's! *Apropos* to which face he gave us a humorous description of an unfinished portrait, that served him for a sort of barometer, to indicate the state of his popularity. So sure as his name made any temporary stir, out came the canvas on the easel, and a request from the artist for another sitting: down sank the Original in the public notice, and back went the copy into a corner, till some fresh publication or accident again brought forward the Poet; and then forth came the picture for a few more touches. I sincerely hope it has been finished! What a benign, smiling face it was! What a comfortable, respectable figure! What a model, methought, as I watched and admired the "Old Man eloquent," for a Christian bishop! But he was, perhaps, scarcely orthodox enough to be trusted with a mitre. At least, some of his voluntaries would have frightened a common every-day congregation from their propriety. Amongst other matters of discourse, he came to speak of the strange notions some literal-minded persons form of the joys of Heaven; joys they associated with mere temporal things, in which, for his own part, finding no delight in this world, he could find no bliss hereafter, without a change in his nature, tantamount to the loss of his personal identity. For instance, he said, there are persons who place the whole angelical beatitude in the possession of a pair of wings to flap about with, like "*a sort of celestial poultry.*" After dinner he got up, and began pacing to and fro, with his hands behind his

back, talking and walking, as Lamb laughingly hinted, as if qualifying for an itinerant preacher; now fetching a simile from Loddiges's garden, at Hackney; and then flying off for an illustration to the sugar-making in Jamaica. With his fine, flowing voice, it was glorious music, of the "never-ending, still-beginning" kind; and you did not wish it to end. It was rare flying, as in the Nassau Balloon; you knew not whither, nor did you care. Like his own bright-eyed Marinere, he had a spell in his voice that would not let you go. To attempt to describe my own feeling afterward, I had been carried, spiralling, up to heaven by a whirlwind intertwisted with sunbeams, giddy and dazzled, but not displeased, and had then been rained down again with a shower of mundane stocks and stones that battered out of me all recollection of what I had heard, and what I had seen!

On the second occasion, the author of Christabel was accompanied by one of his sons. The Poet, talking and walking as usual, chanced to pursue some argument, which drew from the son, who had not been introduced to me, the remark, "Ah, that's just like your crying up those foolish Odes and Addresses!" Coleridge was highly amused with this *mal-àpropos*, and, without explaining, looked slyly round at me, with the sort of suppressed laugh, one may suppose to belong to the Bey of *Tittery*. The truth was, he felt naturally partial to a book he had attributed in the first instance to the dearest of his friends.

"My dear Charles, —

"This afternoon, a little, thin, mean-looking sort of a foolscap, sub-octavo of poems, printed on very dingy outsides, lay on the table, which the cover informed me was circulating in our book-club, so very Grub Streetish in all its appearance, internal as well as external, that I cannot explain by what accident of impulse (assuredly there was no *motive* in play) I came to look into it. Least of all, the title, Odes and Addresses to Great Men, which connected itself in my head with Rejected Addresses, and all the Smith and Theodore Hook squad. But, my dear Charles, it was certainly written by you, or under you, or *una cum* you. I know none of your frequent visitors capacious and assimilative enough of your converse to have reproduced you so honestly, supposing you had left yourself in pledge in his lock-up house. Gillman, to whom I read the spirited parody on the introduction to Peter Bell, the Ode to the Great Unknown, and to Mrs. Fry; he speaks doubtfully of Reynolds and Hood. But here come Irving and Basil Montagu.

"*Thursday night*, 10 *o'clock.*

"No! Charles, it is *you*. I have read them over again, and I understand why you have *anon'd* the book. The puns are nine in ten good — many excellent — the *Newgatory* transcendent. And then the *exemplum sine exemplo* of a volume of personalities and contemporaneities, without a single line that could inflict the infinitesimal of an unpleasance on any man in his senses; saving and except perhaps in the envy-addled brain of the despiser of your *Lays*. If not a triumph over him, it is at least an *ovation*. Then, moreover, and besides, to speak with becoming modesty, excepting my own self, who is there but you who could write the musical lines and stanzas that are intermixed?

"Here Gillman, come up to my garret, and driven back by the guardian spirits of four huge flower-holders of omnigenous roses and honeysuckles — (Lord have mercy on his hysterical olfactories! what will he do in Paradise? I must have a pair or two of nostril-plugs, or nose-goggles, laid in his coffin) — stands at the door, reading that to M'Adam, and the washerwoman's letter, and he admits *the facts*. You are found *in the manner*, as the lawyers say! so, Mr. Charles! hang yourself up, and send me a line, by way of token and acknowledgment. My dear love to Mary. God bless you and your Unshamabramizer,

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

It may oe mentioned here, that instead of feeling "the infinitesimal of an unpleasance" at being Addressed in the Odes, the once celebrated Mr. Hunt presented to the Authors, a bottle of his best "Permanent Ink," and the eccentric Doctor Kitchiner sent an invitation to dinner.

From Colebrooke, Lamb removed to Enfield Chase, — a painful operation at all times, for as he feelingly misapplied Wordsworth, "the *moving* accident was not his trade." As soon as he was settled, I called upon him, and found him in a bald-looking yellowish house, with a bit of a garden, and a wasp's nest convanient, as the Irish say, for one stung my pony as he stood at the door. Lamb laughed at the fun; but, as the clown says, the whirligig of time brought round its revenges. He was one day bantering my wife on her dread of wasps, when all at once he uttered a horrible shout, — a wounded specimen of the species had slyly crawled up the leg of the table, and stung him in the thumb. I told him it was a refutation well put in, like Smollett's timely snowball. "Yes," said he, "and a stinging commentary on Macbeth —

"*By the pricking of my thumbs,*
Something wicked this way comes."

There were no pastoral yearnings concerned in this Enfield removal. There is no doubt which of Captain Morris's Town and Country Songs would have been most to Lamb's taste. "The sweet shady side of Pall-Mall" would have carried it hollow. In courtesy to a friend, he would select a green lane for a ramble, but, left to himself, he took the turnpike road as often as otherwise. "Scott," says Cunningham, "was a stout walker." Lamb was a *porter* one. He calculated Distances, not by Long Measure, but by Ale and Beer Measure. "Now I have walked a pint." Many a time I have accompanied him in these matches against Meux, not without sharing in the stake, and then, what cheerful and profitable talk! For instance, he once delivered to me orally the substance of the Essay on the Defect of Imagination in Modern Artists, subsequently printed in the Athenæum. But besides the criticism, there were snatches of old poems, golden lines and sentences culled from rare books, and anecdotes of men of note. Marry, it was like going a ramble with gentle Izaak Walton, minus the fishing.

To make these excursions more delightful to one of my temperament, Lamb never affected any spurious gravity. Neither did he ever act the Grand *Senior*. He did not exact that common copy-book respect, which some asinine persons would fain command on account of the mere length of their years. As if, forsooth, what is bad in itself, could be the better for keeping; as if intellects already *mothery*, got anything but *grandmothery* by lapse of time! In this particular he was opposed to Southey, or rather (for Southey has been opposed to himself), to his Poem on the Holly Tree.

"So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng;
So would I seem among the young and gay
More grave than they."

There was nothing of Sir Oracle about Lamb. On the contrary, at sight of a solemn visage that "creamed and mantled like the standing pool," he was the first to pitch a mischievous stone to disturb the duck-weed. "He was a boy-man," as he truly said of Elia; "and his manners lagged behind his years." He liked to herd with people younger

than himself. Perhaps, in his fine generalizing way, he thought that, in relation to Eternity, we are all contemporaries. However, without reckoning birthdays, it was always "Hail fellow, well met;" and although he was my elder by a quarter of a century, he never made me feel, in our excursions, that I was "taking a walk with the schoolmaster." I remember, in one of our strolls, being called to account, very pompously, by the proprietor of an Enfield Villa, who asserted that my dog Dash, who never hunted anything in his dog-days, had chased the sheep; whereupon, Elia, taking the dog's part, said very emphatically, "Hunt *Lambs*, sir? Why, he has never hunted *me!*" But he was always ready for fun, intellectual or practical — now helping to pelt D*****, a modern Dennis, with puns; and then to persuade his sister, God bless her! by a *vox et preterea nihil*, that she was as deaf as an adder. In the same spirit, being requested by a young Schoolmaster to take charge of his flock for a day, "during the unavoidable absence of the Principal," he willingly undertook the charge, but made no other use of his "brief authority" than to give the boys a whole holiday.

As Elia supplied the place of the Pedagogue, so once I was substitute for Lamb himself. A prose article, in the Gem, was not from his hand, though it bore his name. He had promised a contribution, but being unwell, his sister suggested that I should write something for him, and the result was the "Widow," in imitation of his manner. It will be seen that the forgery was taken in good part.

"DEAR LAMB, —

"You are an impudent varlet, but I will keep your secret. We dine at Ayrton's on Thursday, and shall try to find Sarah and her two spare beds for that night only. Miss M. and her Tragedy may be d—d, so may *not* you and your rib. Health attend you.

"Yours,

"*Enfield.* "T. HOOD, ESQ.

"Miss Bridget Hood sends love."

How many of such pleasant reminiscences revive in my memory, whilst thinking of him, like secret writing brought out by the kindly warmth of the fire! But they must be deferred to leave me time and space for other attributes — for example, his charity, in its widest sense, the moderation in

judgment which, as Miller says, is "the Silken String running through the Pearl Chain of all Virtues." If he was intolerant of anything, it was of Intolerance. He would have been (if the foundation had existed, save in the fiction of Rabelais), of the Utopian order of Thelemites, where each man under scriptural warrant did what seemed good in his own eyes. He hated evil-speaking, carping, and petty scandal. On one occasion having slipped out an anecdote, to the discredit of a literary man, during a very confidential conversation, the next moment, with an expression of remorse for having impaired even my opinion of the party, he bound me solemnly to bury the story in my own bosom. In another case he characteristically rebuked the backbiting spirit of a censorious neighbor. Some Mrs. Candor telling him, in expectation of an ill-natured comment, that Miss * * *, the teacher at the Ladies' School, had married a publican. "Has she so?" said Lamb, "then I 'll have my beer there!"

As to his liberality, in a pecuniary sense, he passed (says Lamb of Elia) with some people, through having a settled but moderate income, for a great miser. And in truth he knew the value of money, its power, its usefulness. One January night he told me with great glee that at the end of the late year he had been able to lay by — and thence proceeded to read me a serio-comic lecture on the text, of "Keep your hand out of your Pocket." The truth is, Lamb, like Shakespeare, in the universality of his sympathies, could feel, *pro tempore*, what belonged to the character of a Gripe-all. The reader will remember his capital note in the "Dramatic Specimens," on "the decline of Misers, in consequence of the *Platonic* nature of an affection for Money," since Money was represented by "*flimsies*" instead of substantial coin, the good old solid sonorous dollars and doubloons, and pieces of eight, that might be handled, and hugged, and rattled and perhaps kissed. But to this passion for hoarding he one day attributed a new origin. "A Miser," he said, "is sometimes a grand personification of Fear. He has a fine horror of Poverty. And he is not content to keep want from the door, or at arm's-length, — but he places it, by heaping wealth upon wealth, *at a sublime distance!*" Such was his theory: now for his practice. Amongst his other guests, you occasionally saw an elderly lady, formal, fair, and flaxen-wigged, looking

remarkably like an animated wax doll, — and she *did* visit some friends, or relations, at a toyshop near St. Dunstan's. When she spoke, it was as if by an artificial apparatus, through some defect in her palate, and she had a slight limp and a twist in her figure, occasioned — what would Hannah More have said! — by running down Greenwich Hill! This antiquated personage had been Lamb's Schoolmistress — and on this retrospective consideration, though she could hardly have taught him more than to read his native tongue — he allowed her in her decline, a yearly sum, equal to — what shall I say? — to the stipend which some persons of fortune deem sufficient for the active services of an all-accomplished gentlewoman in the education of their children. Say, thirty pounds per annum!

Such was Charles Lamb. To sum up his character, on his own principle of antagonizing, he was, in his views of human nature, the opposite of Crabbe; in Criticism, of Gifford; in Poetry, of Lord Byron; in Prose, of the last new Novelist; in Philosophy, of Kant; and in Religion, of Sir Andrew Agnew. Of his wit I have endeavored to give such samples as occurred to me; but the spirit of his sayings was too subtle and too much married to the circumstances of the time to survive the occasion. They had the brevity without the levity of wit — some of his puns contained the germs of whole essays. Moreover, like Falstaff, he seemed not only witty himself, but the occasion of it by example in others. "There is M * * * * * * *" said he, "who goes about dropping his good things as an Ostrich lays her eggs, without caring what becomes of them." It was once my good fortune to pick up one of Mr. M.'s foundlings, and it struck me as particularly in Lamb's own style, containing at once a pun and a criticism. "What do you think," asked somebody, "of the book called 'A Day in Stowe Gardens?'" Answer: — "A Day ill be-stowed."

It is now some five years ago, since I stood with other mourners in Edmonton Church Yard, beside a grave in which all that was mortal of Elia was deposited. It may be a dangerous confession to make, but I shed no tear; and scarcely did a sigh escape from my bosom. There were many sources of comfort. He had not died young. He had happily gone before that noble sister, who not in selfishness, but the devo-

tion of a unique affection, would have prayed to survive him but for a day, lest he should miss that tender care which had watched over him upwards from a little child. Finally he had left behind him his works, a rare legacy! — and above all, however much of him had departed, there was still more of him that could not die — for as long as Humanity endures and man owns fellowship with man, the spirit of Charles Lamb will still be extant!

* * * * *

On the publication of the Odes and Addresses, presentation copies were sent, at the suggestion of a friend, to Mr. Canning and Sir Walter Scott. The minister took no notice of the little volume; but the novelist did, in his usual kind manner. An eccentric friend in writing to me, once made a number of colons, semicolons, &c., at the bottom of the paper, adding

> "And these are my points that I place at the foot,
> That you may put stops that I can't stop to put."

It will surprise no one, to observe that the author of Waverley had as little leisure for punctuation.

"Sir Walter Scott has to make thankful acknowledgments for the copy of the Odes to Great People with which he was favored and more particularly for the amusement he has received from the perusal. He wishes the unknown author good health good fortune and whatever other good things can best support and encourage his lively vein of inoffensive and humorous satire.

"*Abbotsford, Melrose, 4th May.*"

The first time I ever saw the Great Unknown, was at the private view of Martin's Picture of "Nineveh," — when, by a striking coincidence, one of our most celebrated women, and one of our greatest men, Mrs. Siddons and Sir Walter Scott, walked simultaneously up opposite sides of the room, and met and shook hands in front of the painting. As Editor of the Gem, I had afterwards occasion to write to Sir Walter, from whom I received the following letter, which contains an allusion to some of his characteristic partialities: —

"My dear Mr. Hood, —

"It was very ungracious in me to leave you in a day's doubt whether I was gratified or otherwise with the honor you did me to

inscribe your whims and oddities to me I received with great pleasure this new mark of your kindness and it was only my leaving your volume and letter in the country which delayed my answer as I forgot the address

"I was favored with Mr. Cooper's beautiful sketch of the heart-piercing incident of the dead greyhound which is executed with a force and fancy which I flatter myself that I who was in my younger days and in part still am a great lover of dogs and horses and an accurate observer of their habits can appreciate. I intend the instant our term ends to send a few verses if I can make any at my years in acknowledgment. I will get a day's leisure for this purpose next week when I expect to be in the country Pray inform Mr. Cooper of my intention though I fear I will be unable to do anything deserving of the subject

"I am very truly your obliged humble servant

"WALTER SCOTT.

"*Edinburgh* 4 *March.*"

At last, during one of his visits to London, I had the honor of a personal interview with Sir Walter Scott at Mr. Lockhart's, in Sussex Place. The number of the house had escaped my memory; but seeing a fine dog down an area, I knocked without hesitation at the door. It happened, however, to be the wrong one. I afterwards mentioned the circumstance to Sir Walter. It was not a bad point, he said, for he was very fond of dogs; but he did not care to have his own animals with him, about London, "for fear he should be taken for Bill Gibbons." I then told him I had lately been reading the Fair Maid of Perth, which had reminded me of a very pleasant day spent many years before, beside the Linn of Campsie, the scene of Conachar's catastrophe. Perhaps he divined what had really occurred to me, — that the Linn, as a cataract, had greatly disappointed me; for he smiled, and shook his head archly, and said he had since seen it himself, and was rather ashamed of it. "But I fear, Mr. Hood, I have done worse than that before now, in finding a Monastery where there was none to be found; though there was plenty (here he smiled again) of Carduus Benedictus, or Holy Thistle."

In the mean time he was finishing his toilet, in order to dine at the Duchess of Kent's; and before he put on his cravat I had an opportunity of noticing the fine massive proportions of his bust. It served to confirm me in my theory

that such mighty men are, and must be, physically, as well as intellectually, gifted beyond ordinary mortals; that their strong minds must be backed by strong bodies. Remembering all that Sir Walter Scott had done, and all that he had suffered, methought he had been in more than one sense "a Giant in the Land." After some more conversation, in the course of which he asked me if I ever came to Scotland, and kindly said he should be glad to see me at Abbotsford, I took my leave, with flattering dreams in my head that never were, and now, alas! never can be, realized!

* * * * *

And now, not to conclude in too melancholy a tone, allow me, gentle reader, to present to you the following genuine letter, the names, merely, for obvious reasons, being disguised.

To T. Hood, Esq.

"Thou 'rt a comical chap — so am I; but thou possessest brains competent to write what I mean; — I don't — therefore Brother Comic wilt thou oblige me (if 't was in my power I would you) — I 'll tell you just what I want, and no more. Of late, Lord * * * has been endeavoring to raise a body of yeomanry in this county. Now there 's a man at Bedfont — a compounder of nauseous drugs — and against whom I owe a grudge, who wishes to enter, but who 's no more fit for a fighter than I for a punster. Now if you will just give him a palpable hit or two in verse, and transmit them to me by post, directed to A. B., Post Office, Bedfont, your kindness shall ever be remembered with feelings of the deepest sincerity and gratitude. His name is 'JAMES BOOKER, CHEMIST,' Bedfont *of course*. If you disapprove of the above, I trust you will not abuse the confidence placed in you, by 'SPLITTING.' You 'll say, how can I? — by showing this letter to him. He knows the handwriting full well — but you 'll not do so, I hope. Perhaps, if you feel a disposition to oblige me, you will do so at your first convenience, ere the matter will be getting stale.

"Yours truly,

"A. B."

"Perhaps you will be kind enough to let me have an answer from you, even if you will NOT condescend to accede to my wish.

"Perhaps you 've not sufficient particulars. He 's a little fellow, flushed face, long nose, precious ugly, housekeeper as ugly, lives between the two Peacock Inns, is a single man, very anxious to get possession of Miss Boltbee, a ward in Chancery with something like

£ 9,000 (WISH he may get it), is famous for his Gout Medicine, sells jalap (should like to make him swallow an ounce), always knows other people's business better than his own, used to go to church, now goes to chapel, and in the whole, is a great rascal.

"Bedfont is thirteen miles from London."

PRESERVED IN SPIRITS.

A SERIO-COMIC REMINISCENCE.

IT seems but the other day — instead of nearly ten years ago — that my drawing-room door opened, and the female servant, with a very peculiar expression of countenance, announced a memorable visitor. Shakespeare has inquired "What is there in a name?" But most assuredly he would have withdrawn the question could he have seen the effect of a patronymic on our Sarah's risible muscles. To render the phenomenon more striking, she was a maiden little addicted to the merry mood: on the contrary, she was rather more sedate than her age warranted. Her face was of a cast decidedly serious — quiet brow — steady eyes — sober nose — precise mouth, and solemn chin, which she

doubled by drawing it in demurely against her neck. The habitual expression of her physiognomy was as grave, short of actual sadness, as human face could assume, reminding you of those set, solid, composed, very decorous visages, that indifferent persons put on for the day at a funeral: her very complexion was uniformly colorless — pale yet not clear — that *slack-baked* look which forbids the idea of levity. When she smiled, which was rarely, and in cases where most females

PLEASE, SIR! HERE 'S MR. GRIMALDI!!!!

of her years would have indulged in a titter, or excusable laugh, it was the faintest possible approach to hilarity — the corners of her mouth curving, if anything, a little downwards. Nothing, in fact, less than galvanism, which "sets corpses a grinning," seemed likely to shock her features into any broad demonstration of jocularity, and yet, lo! there she was, her face shortened by half its length — her mouth stretching from

ear to ear, and hardly able, for a suppressed giggle, to articulate its brief announcement.

I have always considered the above physiognomical miracle — the lighting up of that seemingly impracticable countenance — as the best criticism I have ever *seen* of the performances of the great Pan of Pantomime: — a most eloquent retrospective review of the triumphs of his genius. It was a glorious illustration of the Pleasures of Memory, to behold that face so like the sea in a dead calm on a dull day burst suddenly into ripples and radiance, like the brook that laughs in the sun. What recollections of exquisite fooling must have rushed into her fancy to convert that Quakerly maiden, as by a stage metamorphosis, into a perfect figure of fun! What grotesque fantastic shapes must have come tumbling, rolling, crawling, dangling, dancing, prancing, floundering, flopping, striding, sliding, ambling, shambling, scrambling, stumbling, bundling, and trundling into her mind's-eye, to so startle her features from their propriety! What face-making faces, with telegraphic brows — rolling, reeling, goggling, ogling, hard-winking, and soft-blinking eyes — and grinning, gaping, pinching, puckering mouths must have grimaced at her to put her steady countenance so out of countenance! What is there in a name? Why, magic! A serious, quiet, decrepid man had but to announce himself, and Presto! Prestissimo! before an engineer could cry "Ease her! stop her! back her!" our Sarah had retraced her course up the stream of time to the bright wintry gallery nights at the Lane, or the Garden, or the Midsummer Night's Dream at the Wells. Talk of magnetizers! when did Baron Dupotet, or any of his sect, without pass or manipulation, thus throw a sedate, orderly maiden into an ecstasy, and set her looking through the back of her head at the pantomimical experiences of the past? Talk of Laughing Gas! when was there a facetious fluid so potent that the mere sight of the empty bottle —(for such, alas! the ex-clown was become) — could throw the ticklesome muscles into merry convulsions?

I have often speculated since on Sarah's deportment, when, having ushered "Mr. Grimaldi, *alias* Joe," into the drawing-room, she returned to her kitchen. Of course, in the first flutter and frisk of her animal spirits, she postponed all domestic duties; or, at best, obliviously broke the eggs into the flower-tub, popped the lump of butter into the oven, and

secured the rolling-pin in the safe. More probably she dropped herself into the first chair that offered; and throwing her apron over her head to shut out the daylight, indulged in a lamplight vision of the drolleries of Mother Goose, or the Sleeping Beauty; when the frolics of funny Joe had cheated her for a while of the sorrows of servitude, low wages, a crustaceous mistress, a *perfidus* young man, and a hard place, with perhaps the bodily pains of a recent scald, a bad bruise, and tight shoes. No doubt it had been one of her wishes, born of wonder and curiosity, to see the popular Motley off the stage "in his habit as he lived;" and lo! beyond her hope, she had met him face to face without his paint, and been on speaking terms with that marvellous voice, so sparingly heard, even on the stage.

For my own part, I confess to have been somewhat unsettled as well as the bewildered maid by pantomimical associations. Slowly and seriously as my visitor advanced, and with a decided stoop, I could not forget that I had seen the same personage come in with two odd eyebrows, a pair of right-and-left eyes, a wry nose, a crooked mouth, two wrong arms, two left legs, and a free and easy body without a bone in it, or apparently any centre of gravity. I was half prepared to hear that rare voice break forth smart as the smack of a wagoner's whip, or richly thick and chuckling, like the utterance of a boy laughing, talking, and eating custard, all at once, but a short interval sufficed to dispel the pleasant illusion, and convinced me that the Grimaldi was a total wreck.

> "Alas! how changed from him,
> The life of humor, and the soul of whim."

The lustre of his bright eye was gone — his eloquent face was passive and looked thrown out of work — and his frame was bowed down by no feigned decrepitude. His melancholy errand to me related to a Farewell Address, which at the invitation of his stanch friend Miss Kelly — for it did not require a request — I had undertaken to indite.* He pleaded

* That Hood did not limit his kindness to the preparation of the address, the following paragraph from the *London Literary Gazette* bears witness: — "Our immense favorite, Grimaldi, — under the severe pressure of years and infirmities, — is enabled, through the good feeling and prompt liberality of Mr. Price, to take a benefit at Drury Lane on Friday next; — the last of

earnestly that it might be brief, being, he said, "a bad study," as well as distrustful of his bodily strength. Of his sufferings he spoke with a sad but resigned tone, expressed deep regret at quitting a profession he delighted in, and partly attributed the sudden breaking down of his health to the superior size of one particular stage which required of him a jump extra in getting off. That additional bound, like the bittock at the end of a Scotch mile, had, he thought, overtasked his strength. His whole deportment and conversation impressed me with the opinion that he was a simple, sensible, warm-hearted being, such indeed as he appears in his Memoirs — a Joseph after Parson Adams's own heart. We shook hands heartily, parted, and I never saw him again. He was a rare practical humorist, and I never look into Rabelais with its huge-mouthed Gargantua and his enormous appetite for "plenty of links, chitterlings, and puddings, in their season," without thinking that in Grimaldi and *his* pantomime I have lost my best set of illustrations of that literary extravaganza.

Joseph Grimaldi! — Drury's, Covent Garden's, Sadler's, — everybody's Joe. The friend of Harlequin and Farley-kin — the town-clown — greatest of fools — daintiest of motleys — the true *ami des enfans!* The tricks and changes of life — sadder, alas! than those of pantomime — have made a dismal difference between the former flapping, filching, laughing, bounding antic, and the present Grimaldi. He has no spring in his foot — no mirth in his eye; the corners of his mouth droop mournfully earthwards; and he stoops in the back like the weariest of Time's porters. *L'Allegro* has done with him, and *Il Penseroso* claims him for its own! It is said, besides, that his pockets are neither so large, nor so well stuffed as they used to be on the stage: and it is hard to suppose fun without funds, or broad grins in narrow circumstances.

"Our recommendation of this benefit has also been pressed upon our willing mind by the following characteristic note: —

"'Pray publish in your *Gazette*, that on Friday, the 27th instant, this inimitable clown will take his leave of the boards, at Drury Lane Theatre, in character. After that night, the red and white features of Joe Grimaldi will belong only to tradition! Thenceforth he will be dead to his vocation, — but the pleasant recollection of his admirable fooling will still live with childhood, and manhood, and with

"'T. Hood.'"

PROSPECTUS TO HOOD'S MAGAZINE.

HOOD'S MAGAZINE.

ON THE FIRST OF JANUARY, 1844, PRICE 2s. 6d.

HOOD'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

AND

COMIC MISCELLANY.

WHATEVER may be thought of Dr. Dickson's theory, that the type of disease in general is periodical, there can be no doubt of its applicability to Modern Literature, which is essentially Periodical, whether the type be long primer, brevier, or bourgeois. It appears, moreover, by the rapid consumption of Monthlies, compared with the decline of the Annuals, that frequent fits of publication are more prevalent and popular than yearly paroxysms.

Under these circumstances, no apology is necessary for the present undertaking; but Custom, which exacts an Overture to a new Opera, and a Prologue to a new Play, requires a few words of Introduction to a new Monthly Magazine.

One prominent object, then, of the projected Publication, as implied by the sub-title of "Comic Miscellany," will be the supply of harmless "Mirth for the Million," and light thoughts, to a Public sorely oppressed — if its word be worth a rush, or its complaints of an ounce weight — by hard times, heavy taxes, and those "eating cares" which attend on the securing of food for the day, as well as a provision for the future. For the relief of such afflicted classes, the Editor, assisted by able

Humorists, will dispense a series of papers and woodcuts, which it is hoped will cheer the gloom of Willow Walk, and the loneliness of Wilderness Row — sweeten the bitterness of Camomile Street, and Wormwood Street — smooth the ruffled temper of Cross Street, and enable even Crooked Lane to unbend itself! It is hardly necessary to promise that this end will be pursued without raising a Maiden Blush, much less a Damask, in the nursery grounds of modesty — or trespassing, by wanton personalities, on the parks and lawns of Private Life. In a word, it will aim at being merry and wise, instead of merry and otherwise.

For the Sedate, there will be papers of a becoming gravity; and the lover of Poetry will be supplied with numbers in each Number.

As to Politics, the Reader of HOOD'S MAGAZINE will vainly search in its pages for a Panacea for Agricultural Distress, or a Grand Catholicon for Irish Agitation; he will uselessly seek to know whether we ought to depend for our bread on foreign farmers, or merely on foreign sea-fowl; or if the Repeal of the Union would produce low rents, and only three quarter days. Neither must he hope to learn the proper Terminus of Reform, nor even whether a Finality Man means Campbell's Last Man, or an Undertaker.

A total abstinence from such stimulating topics and fermented questions is, indeed, insured by the established character of the Editor, and his notorious aversion to party spirit. To borrow his own words, from a letter to the Proprietors — "I am no Politician, and far from instructed on those topics which, to parody a common phrase, no gentleman's newspaper should be without. Thus, for any knowledge of mine, the Irish Prosecutions may be for pirating the Irish Melodies; the Pennsylvanians may have repudiated their wives; Duff Green may be a place, like Goose Green; Prince Polignac a dahlia or a carnation, and the Duc de Bordeaux a tulip. The Spanish affairs I could never master, even with a *Pronouncing* Dictionary at my elbow; it would puzzle me to say whether Queen Isabella's majority is or is not equal to Sir Robert Peel's; or if the shelling the Barcelonese was done with bombs and mortars, or the nutcrackers. Prim may be a quaker, and the whole Civil War about the Seville Oranges. Nay, even on domestic matters nearer

home, my profound political ignorance leaves me in doubt on questions concerning which the newsmen's boys and printers' devils have formed very decided opinions; for example, whether the Corn-Law League ought to extend beyond three miles from Mark Lane — or the Sliding Scale should regulate the charges at the Glaciarium; what share the Welch Whigs have had in the Welch Riots, and how far the Ryots in India were excited by the slaughter of the Brahmin Bull. On all such public subjects I am less *au fait* than that Publicist the Potboy, at the public-house, with the insolvent sign, The Hog in the Pound."

Polemics will be excluded with the same rigor; and especially the Tractarian Schism. The reader of HOOD'S MAGAZINE must not hope, therefore, to be told whether an old Protestant Church ought to be plastered with Roman Cement; or, if a design for a new one should be washed in with Newman's colors. And most egregiously will he be disappointed, should he look for Controversial Theology in our Poet's Corner. He might as well expect to see Queens of Sheba, and divided babies, from wearing Solomon's Spectacles!

For the rest, a critical eye will be kept on our current Literature, — a regretful one on the Drama, and a kind one for the Fine Arts, from whose Artesian Well there will be an occasional *drawing*.

With this brief, explanatory Announcement, HOOD'S MAGAZINE AND COMIC MISCELLANY is left to recommend itself by its own merits to those enlightened judges, the Reviewers; and to that impartial jury — too vast to pack in any case — the British Public.

☞ *Office, No.* 1, *Adam Street, Adelphi, where all Orders, Advertisements, and Communications for the Editor, are requested to be addressed.*

LIFE IN THE SICK-ROOM.*

[January, 1844.]

Of all the know-nothing persons in this world, commend us to the man who has "never known a day's illness." He is a moral dunce: one who has lost the greatest lesson in life; who has skipped the finest lecture in that great school of humanity, the Sick Chamber. Let him be versed in mathematics, profound in metaphysics, a ripe scholar in the classics, a bachelor of arts, or even a doctor in divinity, yet is he as one of those gentlemen whose education has been neglected. For all his college acquirements, how inferior is he in wholesome knowledge to the mortal who has had but a quarter's gout, or a half-year of ague — how infinitely below the fellow-creature who has been soundly taught his tic douloureux, thoroughly grounded in the rheumatics, and deeply red in the scarlet fever! And yet what is more common than to hear a great hulking, florid fellow, bragging of an ignorance, a brutal ignorance, that he shares in common with the pig and the bullock, the generality of which die, probably without ever having experienced a day's indisposition.

To such a monster of health the volume before us will be a sealed book; for how can he appreciate its allusions to physical suffering, whose bodily annoyance has never reached beyond a slight tickling of the epidermis, or the tingling of a foot gone to sleep? How should he, who has sailed through life with a clean bill of health, be able to sympathize with the feelings, or the quiet sayings and doings, of an Invalid condemned to a life-long quarantine in his chamber? What should he know of Life in the Sick-Room? As little as our poor paralytic grandmother knows of Life in London.

With ourselves it is otherwise. Afflicted for twenty years with a complication of disorders — the least of which is elephantiasis — bedridden on the broad of our back till it became narrow — and then confined to our chamber as rigidly as if it had been a cell in the Pentonville Penitentiary, we are in a fit state,

* Life in the Sick-Room. By an Invalid. Moxon.

body and mind, to appreciate such a production as Mr. Moxon — not the Effervescing Magnesian, but the worthy publisher — has forwarded with so much sagacity, or instinct, to our own sick ward. The very book for us! if, indeed, we are not actually the very Anonymous of its dedication — the very fellow-sufferer on whose sympathy — "confidently reckoned on, though unasked," the Invalid Author so implicitly relies. We certainly do sympathize most profoundly; and as certainly we are a great sufferer — the greatest, perhaps, in England, except the poor incurable man who is always being cured by Holloway's Ointment.

Enough of ourselves: — and now for the book. The first thing that struck us, on the perusal, was a very judicious omission. Most writers on such a topic as the sick-room would have begun by recommending some pet doctor, or favorite remedy for all diseases; whereas the author has preferred to advise on the selection of an eligible retreat for laying up for life, and especially of a window towards that good aspect, the face of Nature. And truly a long term of infirm health is such a very bad lookout, as to require some better prospect elsewhere. For, not to mention a churchyard, or a dead-wall, what can be worse for a sick prisoner, than to pass year after year in some dull street, contemplating some dull house, never new-fronted, or even insured in a new fire-office, to add a new plate to the two old ones under the middle-window. What more dreadful than to be driven by the monotony outside to the sameness within, till the very figures of the chintz curtain are daguerreotyped on the brain, or the head seems lined with a paper of the same pattern as the one on the wall? How much better, for soul and body, for the Invalid to gaze on such a picture as this: —

"Between my window and the sea is a green down, as green as any field in Ireland; and on the nearest half of this down, hay-making goes forward in its season. It slopes down to a hollow, where the Prior of old preserved his fish, there being sluices formerly at either end, the one opening upon the river, and the other upon the little haven below the Priory, whose ruins still crown the rock. From the Prior's fish-pond, the green down slopes upwards again to a ridge; and on the slope are cows grazing all summer, and half way into the winter. Over the ridge, I survey the harbor and all its traffic, the view extending from the lighthouses far to the right, to a horizon of sea to the left. Beyond the harbor lies

another county, with, first, its sandy beach, where there are frequent wrecks — too interesting to an invalid, — and a fine stretch of rocky shore to the left; and above the rocks, a spreading heath, where I watch troops of boys flying their kites; lovers and friends taking their breezy walk on Sundays; the sportsman with his gun and dog; and the washerwomen converging from the farm-houses on Saturday evenings, to carry their loads, in company, to the village on the yet further height. I see them, now talking in a cluster, as they walk each with her white burden on her head, and now in file, as they pass through the narrow lane; and finally they part off on the village green, each to some neighboring house of the gentry. Behind the village and the heath stretches the railroad; and I watch the train triumphantly careering along the level road, and puffing forth its steam above hedges and groups of trees, and then laboring and panting up the ascent, till it is lost between two heights, which at last bound my view. But on these heights are more objects; a windmill now in motion and now at rest; a lime-kiln, in a picturesque rocky field; an ancient church-tower, barely visible in the morning, but conspicuous when the setting sun shines upon it; a colliery, with its lofty wagon-way, and the self-moving wagons running hither and thither, as if in pure wilfulness; and three or four farms, at various degrees of ascent, whose yards, paddocks, and dairies I am better acquainted with than their inhabitants would believe possible. I know every stack of the one on the heights. Against the sky I see the stacking of corn and hay in the season, and can detect the slicing away of the provender, with an accurate eye, at the distance of several miles. I can follow the sociable farmer in his summer-evening ride, pricking on in the lanes where he is alone, in order to have more time for the unconscionable gossip at the gate of the next farm-house, and for the second talk over the paddock-fence of the next, or for the third or fourth before the porch, or over the wall, when the resident farmer comes out, pipe in mouth, and puffs away amidst his chat till the wife appears, with a shawl over her cap, to see what can detain him so long; and the daughter follows, with her gown turned over head (for it is now chill evening) and at last the sociable horseman finds he must be going, looks at his watch, and, with a gesture of surprise, turns his steed down a steep broken way to the beach, and canters home over the sands, left hard and wet by the ebbing tide, the white horse making his progress visible to me through the dusk. Then, if the question arises which has most of the gossip spirit, he or I, there is no shame in the answer. Any such small amusement is better than harmless — is salutary — which carries the spirit of the sick prisoner abroad into the open air, and among country people. When I shut down my window, I feel that my mind has had an airing."

Here is another: —

"The sun, resting on the edge of the sea, was hidden from me by the walls of the old Priory; but a flood of rays poured through the windows of the ruin, gushed over the waters, strewing them with diamonds, and then across the green down before my windows, gilding its furrows, and then lighting up the yellow sands on the opposite shore of the harbor, while the market-garden below was glittering with dew and busy with early bees and butterflies. Besides these bees and butterflies, nothing seemed stirring, except the earliest riser of the neighborhood, to whom the garden belongs. At the moment, she was passing down to feed her pigs, and let out her cows; and her easy pace, arms akimbo, and complacent survey of her early greens, presented me with a picture of ease so opposite to my own state, as to impress me ineffaceably. I was suffering too much to enjoy this picture at the moment; but how was it at the end of the year? The pains of all those hours were annihilated — as completely vanished as if they had never been; while the momentary peep behind the window-curtain made me possessor of this radiant picture forevermore."

The mention of pictures reminds us of certain ones, and a commentary whence the reader may derive either a recipe, or a warning, as he desires to be, or not to be, an invalid for the remainder of his life. O, those beautiful pictures by our favorite Cuyp, with their rich atmosphere as of golden sherry and water! That gorgeous light flooding the wide level pasture,— clinging to tree and stone, and trickling over into their shadows — a liquid radiance, we used to fancy we could wring out of the glowing herbage, and catch dripping from the sleek side of the dappled cow! Sad experience has made us personally acquainted with the original soil and climate of those scenes, and has painfully taught us that the rich glowing atmosphere was no such wholesome aerial negus as we supposed, but a mixture of sunshine and humid exhalations, lovely but noxious — a gilded ague, an illuminated fever, a glorified pestilence, — which poisons the springs of life at their source. Breathe it, in bad health, and your fugitive complaints will become chronic,— regular standards, entwined in all their branches by the parasitic long slow fever of the swamp. In short, you will probably be set in for a long season of foul bodily weather, and may at once consult our Invalid how to play the part in a becoming manner, and "enjoy bad health" with something of the cheerful, philosophic spirit of the family man, who, on being

asked if he had not a "sick-house," replied "Yes — but I 've a *well* staircase."

The first grand step towards laying up in ordinary is to get rid of the superb egotism and splendid selfishness of the condition. Lamb, in one of his Essays, has vividly described the gloomy absolutism of the sick man, obsequiously waited on by his household slaves, eager to anticipate his every want and wish, and to administer to his merest whims and caprices. And, for a short reign, such a tyranny may pass, but the confirmed invalid must prepare for a more moderate rule; a limited monarchy instead of a despotism. It requires some self-sacrifice to renounce such autocratical power, and will need much vigilance to prevent a relapse. But who, save a domestic Nero, would wish to indulge in such *ill* behavior as the following, for a permanence?

"I have known the most devoted and benevolent of women call up her young nurse from a snatch of sleep at two in the morning to read aloud, when she had been reading aloud for six or seven hours of the preceding day. I have known a kind-hearted and self-denying man require of two or three members of his family to sit and talk and be merry in his chamber, two or three hours after midnight: and both for want of a mere intimation that it was night, and time for the nurse's rest. How it makes one shudder to think of this being one's own case!"

It is rather difficult to believe in the habitual benevolence or considerateness of the parties who needed a broad hint on such matters; and yet real illness may make even a self-denying nature somewhat *exigeant*, when mere fanciful ailments render selfishness so intensely selfish. Ask the Physician, Surgeon, and Apothecary, and they will tell you, that for every hard-hearted medical man, who refuses or delays to attend on the urgent seizures and accidents of the poor, there are thousands of practitioners dragged from their warm beds at night, through wind, rain, snow, sleet, hail, and thunder and lightning — over heaths and through marshes, and along country cross-roads — at the risk of catarrh, rheumatism, ague, bronchitis, and inflammation — of falls, fractures, and footpads — on the most frivolous pretences that wealth and the vapors can invent. There is even a perversity in some natures that would find a dirty comfort in the muddy discomfort of an Esculapius soused in provincial muck, like Doctor

Slop, by an encounter with a coach-horse — for, what right has the physician to enjoy more bodily ease than his patient? For such a spirit we imperatively prescribe a chapter of "Life in the Sick-room," night and morning, until he learns that the very worst excuse a man can offer for selfishness is, that he is "not quite himself."

There is, however, another peril of invalidism, akin to the "damning of sins we have no mind to" described in Hudibras: —

"We are in ever-growing danger of becoming too abstract, — of losing our sympathy with passing emotions, — and particularly with those shared by numbers. There was a time when we went to public worship with others, — to the theatre, — to public meetings; when we were present at picnic parties and other festivals, and heard general conversation every day of our lives. Now, we are too apt to forget those times. The danger is, lest we should get to despise them, and to fancy ourselves superior to our former selves, because now we feel no social transports."

True. We have ourselves felt a touch of that peril in our weaker moments — on some dull, cold, wet day, when our pores, acting inversely, instead of throwing off moisture, take in as much as they can collect from the damp atmosphere, well chilled by an easterly wind. At such times a sort of Zimmermannishness has crept over us, like a moral gooseskin, inducing a low estimate of all gregarious enjoyments, public meetings, and public dinners; and above all, those public choruses on Wilhelm's method, at Exeter Hall. What sympathy can We-by-ourselves-We have with Music for a Million? But the fit soon evaporates, when, looking into the garden, we see Theophilus Junior, that second edition of our own boyhood, in default of brothers or playmates, making a whole mob of himself, or at the least a troop of cavalry, commanding for the captain, huzzaing for the soldiers, blowing flourishes for the trumpeter, and even prancing, neighing, and snorting for all the horses! One dose of that joyous Socialism is a cure for our worst attack of the mopes. The truth is, an invalid's misanthropy is no more in earnest than the piety of the sick demon who wanted to be a monk, or the sentence about being weary of existence, to which Hypochondriasis puts a period with a Parr's Life Pill!

A more serious peril, from illness, concerns the temper.

When the neves are irritable, and the skin is irritable, and the stomach is irritable, — not to be irritable altogether is a moral miracle ; and especially in England, where, by one of the anomalies of the constitution, whilst a man cannot be tried twice for the same offence, his temper may be tried over and over again for no offence at all. Indeed, as our author says, " there are cases, and not a few, where an invalid's freedom from irritability is a merit of the highest order." For example, after soot in your gruel, tallow-grease in your barley-water, and snuff over your light pudding, to have " the draught as before " poured into your wakeful eyes, instead of your open mouth, by a drunken Mrs. Gamp, or one of her stamp. To check at such a moment the explosive speech, is at least equal to spiking a cannon in the heat of battle. There is beyond denial an ease to the chest, or somewhere, in a passionate objurgation — (" Swear, my dear," said Fuseli to his wife, " it will relieve you ") — so much so, that a certain invalid of our acquaintance, doubly afflicted with a painful complaint, and an unmanageable, hard-mouthed temper, regularly retains, as helper to the sick nurse, a stone-deaf old woman, whom he can abuse without violence to her feelings.

How much better to have emulated the heavenly patience in sickness of which Woman — in spite of Job — has given the brightest examples — Woman, who endures the severest trials with a meekness and submission unheard of amongst men, the quaker excepted, who merely said, when his throat was being cut rather roughly — " Friend, thee dost haggle."

It must not be concealed, however, as regards irritability of temper in the sick-room — there are faults on both sides — captious nurses as well as querulous nurselings. Cross-patches themselves, they willingly mistake the tones and accents of intolerable anguish, naturally sharp and hurried, for those of anger and impatience — and even accuse pain, in its contortions, of making faces, and set up their backs at the random speeches of poor delirium ! Then there are your lecturers, who preach patience in the very climax of a paroxysm, when the sermon can scarcely be heard, certainly not understood — as if a martyr, leaping mad with the toothache, could be calmed by reading to him the advertisement of the American Soothing Syrup ! And then there is the she-dragon, who bullies the sufferer into comparative quiet ! Not that the

best of attendants is the smoothed-tongued. Our invalid objects wisely to the sick being flattered, in season or out, with false hopes and views. As much panada, sago, or arrowroot as you please, but no flummery.

"Let the nurse avow that the medicine is nauseous. Let the physician declare that the treatment will be painful. Let sister, or brother, or friend, tell me that I must never look to be well. When the time approaches that I am to die, let me be told that I am to die, and when. If I encroach thoughtlessly on the time or strength of those about me, let me be reminded; if selfishly, let me be remonstrated with. Thus to speak the truth with love is in the power of us all."

And so say we. There is nothing worse for soul or body than the feverish agitation kept up by the struggle between external assurances and the internal conviction; for the mind will cling with forlorn pertinacity to the most desperate chance, like the sailor, who, when the ship was in danger of sinking, lashed himself to the sheet-anchor because it was the emblem of Hope. Till the truth is known there can be no calm of mind. It is only after he has abandoned all prospects of pardon or reprieve, that the capital convict sleeps soundly and dreams of green fields. So with ourselves; once satisfied that our case was beyond remedy, we gave up without reserve all dreams of future health and strength, and prepared, instead, to compete with that very able invalid who was able to be knocked down with a feather. Thenceforward, free of those jarring vibrations between hope and fear, relieved from all tantalizing speculations on the weather's clearing up, our state has been one of comparative peace and ease. We would not give one of our Pectoral Lozenges to be told, we are looking better than a month ago — not a splinter of our broken crutch to be promised a new lease of life — a renewal of our youth like the eagle's! Such flatteries go in at one ear, the deaf one, and out at the other. We never shall be well again, till broken bones are mended with "soft sawder."

Are we, therefore, miserable, hypped, disconsolate? Answer, ye book-shelves, whence we draw the consolations of Philosophy, the dreams of Poetry and Romance, — the retrospections of History, — and glimpses of society from the better novels; mirth, comfort, and entertainment even for those small hours become so long from an unhealthy vigilance.

Answer, ye pictures and prints, a Portrait Gallery of Nature! — and reply in your own tones, dear old fiddle, so often tuned to one favorite sadly-sweet air, and the words of Curran: —

"But since in wailing
There 's naught availing,
But Death unfailing
Must strike the blow,
Then for this reason,
And for a season,
Let us be merry before we go!"

It is melancholy, doubtless, to retire in the prime of life, from the whole wide world, into the narrow prison of a sick-room. How much worse if that room be a wretched garret, with the naked tiles above and the bare boards below — no swinging bookshelf — not a penny colored print on the blank wall! And yet that forlorn attic is but the type of a more dreadful destitution, an unfurnished mind! The mother of Bloomfield used to say, that to encounter Old Age, Winter, and Poverty, was like meeting three Giants; she might have added two more, as huge and terrible, Sickness and Ignorance — the last, not the least, of the Monster Evils; for it is he who affects pauperism with a deeper poverty — the beggary of the mind and soul.

"I have said how unavailing is luxury when the body is distressed and the spirit faint. At such times, and at all times, we cannot but be deeply grieved at the conception of the converse of our own state, at the thought of the multitude of poor suffering under privation, without the support and solace of great ideas. It is sad enough to think of them on a winter's night, aching with cold in every limb, and sunk as low as we in nerve and spirits, from their want of sufficient food. But this thought is supportable in cases where we may fairly hope that the greatest ideas are cheering them as we are cheered: that there is a mere set-off of their cold and hunger against our disease; and that we are alike inspired by spiritual vigor in the belief that our Father is with us, — that we are only encountering the probations of our pilgrimage, — that we have a divine work given us to carry out, now in pain and now in joy. There is comfort in the midst of the sadness and shame when we are thinking of the poor who can reflect and pray, — of the old woman who was once a punctual and eager attendant at church, — of the wasting child who was formerly a Sunday-scholar, — of the reduced gentleman or destitue student who retain the privilege of their humanity, — of 'looking before and after.' But there is no mitigation of the horror when we think of the savage poor, who

form so large a proportion of the hungerers, — when we conceive of them suffering the privation of all good things at once, — suffering under the aching cold, the sinking hunger, the shivering nakedness, — without the respite or solace afforded by one inspiring or beguiling idea.

"I will not dwell on the reflection. A glimpse into this hell ought to suffice (though we to whom imagery comes unbidden, and cannot be banished at will, have to bear much more than occasional glimpses;) a glimpse ought to suffice to set all to work to procure for every one of these sufferers, bread and warmth, if possible, and as soon as possible; but above everything, and without the loss of an hour, an entrance upon their spiritual birthright. Every man, and every woman, however wise and tender, appearing and designing to be, who for an hour helps to keep closed the entrance to the region of ideas, — who stands between sufferers and great thoughts, (which are the angels of consolation sent by God to all to whom he has given souls,) are, in so far, ministers of hell, not themselves inflicting torment, but intercepting the influences which would assuage or overpower it. Let the plea be heard of us sufferers who know well the power of ideas, — our plea for the poor, that, while we are contriving for all to be fed and cherished by food and fire, we may meanwhile kindle the immortal vitality within them, and give them that ethereal solace and sustenance which was meant to be shared by all, 'without money and without price.'"

Never, then, tell a man, permanently sick, that he will again be a perfect picture of health when he has not the frame for it — nor hint to a sick woman, incurably smitten, that the seeds of her disease will flourish and flower into lilies and roses. Why deter them from providing suitable pleasures and enjoyments to replace those delights of health and strength of which they must take leave forever? Why not rather forewarn them of the Lapland Winter to which they are destined, and to trim their lamps spiritual, for the darkness of a long seclusion? Tell them their doom; and let them prepare themselves for it, according to the Essays before us, so healthy in tone, though from a confirmed Invalid — so wholesome and salutary, though furnished from a Sick-Room.

A NEW SPIRIT OF THE AGE.*

It was our intention to have reviewed this work seriously, in the present number of the Magazine; but an unlucky curiosity prompting us to turn, first, to the chapter at page 51, Vol. II., we stumbled on so bewildering a passage that we have done nothing but grope about in it ever since — even as the old woman who had her identity "cut all round about," and tried, in vain, to recognize herself by the help of her little dog.

"Mr. Hood was a wit about town, and a philosopher while recovering from 'the effects of last night.' His writings tended to give an unfavorable view of human nature, to make one suspicious and scornful. On the whole, though you had been amused and interested as you went on, you were left uncomfortable and wished you could forget what you had read."

A wit about town! What town? Certainly not London. Not, it may be taken for granted, the Great Metropolis. The Country knows better. We are hardly reckoned a wit, even at Whitsuntide, about Ponder's End — a mere village. About town, as unknown for *jeux d'esprit* as the Townley marbles. Had the phrase referred, indeed, to Horace or James Smith, it might have had some consonance; or likelier still, if it had been applied to our all but namesake, the author of "Sayings and Doings," who was notoriously a wit about town, and especially about midnight. Hook, as Mr. R. H. Horne truly says, possessed both wit and humor. It was he who, when C., the publisher, wished to re-christen his unprofitable "Factory Boy," replied, "O, nothing more easy — call him the Unsatisfactory Boy!" — a repartee far beyond the wickedness of our wit, if it had been had up at Marlborough Street on purpose.

Such a convivialist, famous for lighting up certain of the club-houses with laughing-gas, had occasionally, no doubt, to

* A New Spirit of the Age. Edited by R. H. Horne. Smith and Elder.

philosophize at a serious breakfast, after a gay supper. As much has been hinted by his biographers. But who ever heard of our recovering from "the effects of over night?" Why, last night we drank nothing but gruel — not elevated by rum, and sugar, and spice, into a caudle, — but plain temperance gruel — a cup of Scotch porridge drowned in a basin of water. Who *could* recover from that? The early Edinburgh Reviewers, indeed, professed, according to Sidney Smith, to "philosophize on a little oat-meal," but experience soon showed that it was impossible to be Transcendental on Horse-Parliament-Cakes.

A worse count in the indictment now demands a plea — that "our writing tends to give an unfavorable view of human nature; to make one suspicious and scornful!" Not Guilty! It is no fault of ours if some noses have a pugnacious turn-up with all mankind; if some faces, with what ought to be a pair of right-and-left eyes, cast only a sinister glance at the human race. It was never our peculiar pleasure to represent our fellow-creatures as no better than they should be — on the contrary, like the good mother when somebody described her children as little angels, we "wish they was." If, therefore, those who have been amused and interested by our poor lucubrations, have been left uncomfortable on the whole, and wished to forget what they had read, it must have been from some other cause than our misanthropy — the presence, perhaps, as objected to in the majority of our "Whims and Oddities," of some "painful physicality;" for example, an old man with his nightcap alight; an unpleasant incident enough, as a bare fact, but at least serio-comic when he goes sniffing down stairs to ask John and Mary if they do not smell fire? But it is as impossible to please all tastes as to suit some notions of coziness. Even in the first number of this magazine, there were readers of the "Haunted House," to whom a ghost or goblin of any kind would have been a real comfort. A desirable spectre is certainly "A New Spirit of the Age," and ought to figure conspicuously in Mr. George Robins's next advertisement of an old Family Mansion.

And now to come to a palpable personality, who will believe that we, a wit about Town, and a philosopher on sermons and soda-water, resemble "a gentleman of a serious turn of mind, who is out of health" — or, in plain English, a consumptive

Methodist parson? Grave we certainly are, and an invalid; but who can credit that with "this unpromising outside and melancholic atmosphere," we are the wit of the Athenæum — the wag of the Carlton — the practical joker of the Garrick — the life of the Green Room? Who will swallow —? but stop. An ingenious friend suggests that we are, possibly, the victim of a mistake of the press — the substitution of a D for a K — that we have had our name, as Byron says, blundered in the Gazette.

> "Thrice happy he whose name has been well spelt
> In the despatch: I knew a man whose loss
> Was printed Grove, although his name was Grose."

An explanation the more plausible, seeing that Mr. Horne has hung us elsewhere with compliments much too flattering to quote. So for the present we gratefully make our best bow to him, only requesting that in his second, or at any rate his third edition of "A New Spirit of the Age," he will have the kindness to insert the following erratum: —

Vol. II. page 57, 6th line from the top, *for* Hood *read* Hook.

IS THIS ROGERS'S LAST, OR YOUR OWN?

THE ECHO.

[March, 1844.]

THE writer of the following Letter guesses so truly at the main cause of the delay in the publication of the present number, that our best explanation to our subscribers will be, to give the epistle entire, *verbatim et literatim*, — as addressed to the Editor.

"SIR, —

"By your not cumming out on the Furst, I conclude you are lade up — being notorus for enjoyin bad helth. Pullmery, of course. Like my poor Robert — for I've had a littery branch in my own fammily — a periodical one like yourself, only every Sunday, insted of once a munth; and as such, well knew what it was to write long-winded articles with Weekly lungs. Poor fellow! As I often said, so much head work, and nothin but Head work, will make a Cherubbim of you: and, so it did. Nothing but write— write — write, and read — read — read; and, as our Doctor says, it 's as bad to studdy till all is brown, as to drink till all is blew. Mix your cullers. And wery good advice it is — when it can be follerd, witch is not always the case: for if necessity has no Law, it has a good deal of Litterature, and Authers must rite what they must.

"As poor Robert used to say about seddontary habits, it 's very well, says he, to tell me about — like Mr. Wordsworth's single man as grew dubble — sticking to my chair; but if there 's no sitting, says he, ther 'll be no hatching; and if I do brood too much at my desk it 's because there 's a brood expected from me once a week. Oh! it 's very well, says he, to cry Up, up with you; and go and fetch a walk, and take a look at the daisies, when you 've sold your mind to Miffy Stofilis; and there 's a Divil waiting for your last proofs, as he did for Doctor Forster's. I know it 's killin me, says he; but if I die of overwork it 's in the way of my vacation. Poor boy! I did all I could to nurridge him: Mock Turkey soop and strong

slops, and Wormy Jelly and Island Moss; but he could n't eat. And no wunder; for mental laber, as the Doctor said, wares out the stummack as well as the Branes, and so he 'd been spinning out his inside like a spider. And a spider he did look at last, sure enuff — one of that sort, with long spindle legs, and only a dot of a Boddy in the middle.

"Another bad thing is settin up all nite as my Sun did, but it 's all agin Natur. Not but what sum must, and partickly the writers of Polliticks for the Papers; but they ruin the Constitushun. And, besides, even Poetry is apt to get prosy after twelve or one; and some late authors read very sleepy. But as poor Robert said, what is one to do when no day is long enuff for one's work, nor no munth either. And to be sure, April, June, November, and September are all short munths, but Febber-*very!* However, one grate thing is, relaxing — if you can. As the Doctor used to say, what made Jack a dull boy — why being always in the workhouse and never at the playhouse. So get out of your gownd and slippers, says he, and put on your Best Things and unbend yourself like a Beau. If you 've been at your poeticle flights, go and look at the Tems Tunnel; and if you 're tired of being Witty, go and spend a hour with the Wax Wurk. The mind requires a Change as well as the merchants.

"So take my advice, Sir — a mother's advice — and relax a littel. I know what it is: You want brassing, a change of Hair, and more stummuck. And you ought to ware flannin, and take tonicks. Do you ever drink Basses Pail? It 's as good as cammomile Tea. But above all, there 's one thing I 'd recummend to you: Steal Wine. It 's been a savin to sum invallids.

"Hoping you will excuse this libberty from a Stranger, but a well-meening one,

"I am, Sir,

"A SUBSCRIBBER."

THE ECHO.

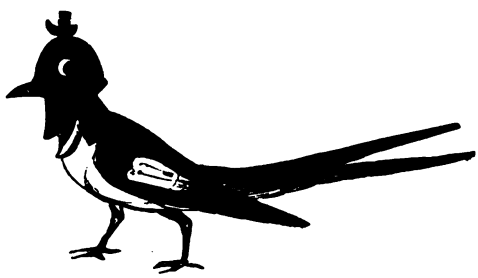
[June, 1844.]

It is with feelings of the deepest concern that we acquaint our subscribers and the public with the circumstances that have, during the past month, deprived this Magazine of the invaluable services of its Editor. A severe attack of the disorder to which he has long been subject — hemorrhage from the lungs, occasioned by enlargement of the heart (itself brought on by the wearing excitement of ceaseless and excessive literary toil) — has, in the course of a few weeks, reduced Mr. Hood to a state of such extreme debility and exhaustion, that during several days fears were entertained for his life. Nevertheless, up to Thursday, the 23d, he did not relinquish the hope that he should have strength to continue, in the present number, the Novel which he began in the last; and he even directed his intention to be announced in the advertisements which were sent out, on that day, to the Saturday journals. On the same evening sitting up in bed, he tried to invent and sketch a few comic designs; but even this effort exceeded his strength, and was followed by the wandering delirium of utter nervous exhaustion. Next morning his medical attendants declared that the repetition of any such attempt, at that critical period of his illness, might cost him his life. We trust that this brief explanation will obtain for Mr. Hood the sympathy and kind indulgence of our subscribers; and, especially, that it will satisfy them of the perfect *bona fides* with which the promise of a contribution from his pen was advertised in the Saturday papers. Mr. Hood, we are happy to say, is now gradually recovering strength; and there is every reason to expect that he will be able, in the next number, to give the promised new chapter and illustrations, at present of necessity deferred.

Conscious of his enfeebled powers and uncertain hand, Mr. Hood threw aside the above-mentioned sketches, as too insignificant for publication. But it has been thought that the contrast of their sprightly humor with the pain and prostration in

the midst of which they were produced, might give them a peculiar interest, independent of any merit of their own: suggesting, perhaps, the reflection (never too trite to be repeated, so long as it is too true to be denied) by what harrassing efforts the food of careless mirth is furnished; and how often the pleasure of the Many costs bitter endurance to One.

Disobeying, therefore, for once, the direction of our chief, we have preserved two of these "sick-room fancies," which will enable us to convey, in his own quaint picture-language, to the readers of



HOOD'S MAG,

THE EDITOR'S APOLOGIES.

THE ECHO.

[July, 1844.]

It is with unfeigned pleasure that, after a silence of a month, I renew my intercourse with my readers, through the "still small voice of print."

During the interval it has been my lot to undergo a fearful wrestling with Death; and although I have, for the present, escaped that fatal back fall by which he has thrown so many of his mortal antagonists, enough remains in my shattered frame to remind me of the physical pangs and wrenches of so protracted a contest. Indeed, for the future, as at present, the serious and incurable nature of my complaints will require my whole stock of that cheerful philosophy which it has been my aim to recommend, heretofore, by my pen and personal practice. And, after all (and be this my answer to the correspondent who signs himself "Verity"), it is better to have an enlarged heart than a contracted one; and even such a hemorrhage as mine than a spitting of spite.

It will doubtless surprise some persons who have read the "Echo," in the last number, to find me so soon resuming the pen and the pencil. The truth is, such exercises are somewhat against the triple injunction of my medical advisers, who strenuously ordered me "to do nothing," but which, on trial, was so hard to do, that a head and hand, unaccustomed to sheer idleness, flew to any work in preference. To the kind, but unknown friends, who have afforded me their sympathy — some, by letter — a few designs and a chapter will be welcome evidences of my recovery, or rather amendment; for I have not even yet taken a final leave of my physicians, nor made, without reserve, the present, recommended by Macbeth, to the canine race.

Thomas Hood.

"PHYSIC TO THE DOGS."

THE ECHO.

[January, 1845.]

Some months since, Mr. Edward Davis, the well-known sculptor, applied to me to sit to him for a Bust. My vanity readily complied with the request; and in due time I found myself in his studio, installed in a crimson-covered elbow-chair, amidst an assemblage of Heads, hard and soft, white, drab, and stone-color. Here, a young Nobleman — one of the handsomest of the day — in painted plaster; there, a benevolent-looking Bishop in clear white sparkling marble, next to a brown clay head, like Refined and Moist. A number of unfinished models, of what Beau Brummel would have called "damp strangers," were tied up in wet cloths, from which every moment you expected to hear a sneeze: the veiled ones comprising a lady or two, a barrister, and a judge. All these were on pedestals: but in the background, on the boards, stood numerous other busts, dwarfish or gigantic, heads and shoulders, like Oriental Genii coming up through the floor — some white and clean, as if fresh from the waters under the earth; others dingy and smoky, as if from its subterranean fireplaces — some young, some old, some smiling, and others grave, or even frowning severely; with one alarming face, reminding me of those hard, brutal countenances that are seen on street-doors.

On the mantel-shelf silently roared the Caput of the Laocoön, with deeply indented eyeballs, instead of the regulation blanks; and what the play people call a practicable mouth, i. e. into which you might poke your finger down to the gullet; and, lastly, on the walls were sundry mystical sketches in black and white chalk, which you might turn, as fancy prompted, like Hamlet's cloud, into any figure you pleased, from a weasel to a whale.

To return to self. The artist, after setting up before me what seemed a small mountain of putty, with a bold scoop of his thumbs marked out my eyes; next taking a good pinch

of clay — an operation I seemed to feel by sympathy — from between my shoulders, clapped me on a rough nose, and then stuck the surplus material in a large wart on my chest. In short, by similar proceedings, scraping, smoothing, dabbing

A KNOCKER-DOWN.

on and taking off, at the end of the first sitting, Sculptor had made the upper half of a mud doll, the size of life, looking very like "the *idol* of his own circle" in the Cannibal Islands.

At subsequent sittings, this heathen figure gradually became not only more Christian-like, but more and more like the original; till finally it put on that striking resemblance which is so satisfactory to one's wife and family, and, as it were, introduces a man to himself.

An Engraving by Mr. Heath from this Bust is intended to form the frontispiece to the Second Volume of this Magazine, and will be given with the next Number, should the interval be sufficient for the careful execution and finish of the plate. The Address that should have been offered, the present month, will accompany the engraving; the same cause that postpones it — a severe indisposition — will be accepted per-

haps as a sufficient apology for the absence of the usual Answers to Correspondents. In the mean time all good wishes are briefly tendered to the vast ring of friends and the increasing circle of subscribers, to whose entertainment, at the present season, I have tried to contribute.

T. H.

DOMESTIC MESMERISM.

[January, 1845.]

"Gape, sinner and swallow."—MEG MERRILIES.

It is now just a year since we reviewed Miss Martineau's "Life in the Sick-Room," and left the authoress set in for a house-ridden invalid, alernating between her bed and the sofa; unable to walk out of doors, but enjoying through her window and a telescope the prospect of green downs and heath, an old priory, a limekiln, a colliery railway, an ancient church, a windmill, a farm, with hay and corn stacks, a market garden, gossiping farmers, sportsmen, boys flying kites, washerwomen, a dairymaid feeding pigs, the lighthouses, harbor, and shipping of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and a large assortment of objects, pastoral, marine, and picturesque. There we left the "sick prisoner," as we supposed, quite aware of a condition beyond remedy, and cheerfully made up for her fate by the help of philosophy, laudanum, and Christian resignation.

There never was a greater mistake. Instead of the presumed calm submission in a hopeless case, the invalid was intently watching the progress of a new curative legerdemain, sympathizing with its repudiated professors, and secretly intending to try whether her own chronic complaint could not be conjured away with a "Hey, presto! pass and repass!" like a pea from under the thimble The experiment it seems

has been made, and lo! like one of the patients of the old quacksalvers, forth comes Miss Martineau on the public stage, proclaiming to the gaping crowd how her long-standing, inveterate complaint, that baffled all the doctors, has been charmed away like a wart, and that, from being a helpless cripple, she has thrown away her crutches, literal or metaphorical, and can walk a mile as well as any Milesian. And this miraculous cure, not due to Holloway, Parr, Morison, or any of the rest of the faculty, nor to any marvellous ointment, infallible pills, or new discovery in medicine, but solely to certain magical gesticulations, as safe, pleasant, and easy as playing at cat's cradle — in short, by Mesmerism!

Now we are, as we have said before, the greatest Invalid in England; with a complication of complaints requiring quite a staff of physicians, each to watch and treat the particular disease which he has made his peculiar study: as, one for the heart, another for the lungs, a third for the stomach, a fourth for the liver, and so on. Above all, we are incapable of pedestrian locomotion; lamer than Crutched Friars, and, between gout in our ankles and rheumatism in our knees, could as easily walk on our head, like Quilp's boy, as on our legs. It would delight us, therefore, to believe that by no painful operation, but only a little posture-making behind our back or to our face, we could be restored to the use of our precious limbs, to walk like a Leaguer, and run again like a renewed bill. But alas! an anxious examination of Miss Martineau's statements has satisfied us that there is no chance of such a desirable consummation; that, to use a common phrase, "the news is too good to be true." We have carefully waded through the Newcastle letters, occupying some two dozen mortal columns of the "Athenæum," and with something of the mystified feeling of having been reading by turns and snatches in Moore's Almanac, Zadkiel's Astrology, a dream-book, and a treatise on metaphysics, have come to the sorrowful conclusion that we have as much chance of a cure by Mesmerism, as of walking a thousand miles in a thousand hours through merely reading the constant advertisements of the Patent Pedometer. A conviction not at all removed by an actual encounter with a professor, who, after experimenting on the palms of our hands without exciting any peculiar sensation, except that quivering of the diaphragm which results

from suppressed laughter, gravely informed us — slipping through a pleasant loophole of retreat from all difficulties — that "we were not in a fit state."

The precise nature of Miss Martineau's complaint is not stated; nor is it material to be known except to the professional man: the great fact, that after five year's confinement to the house she can walk as many miles without fatigue, thanks to the mysterious Ism, "that sadly wants a new name," is a sufficient subject for wonder, curiosity, and common sense to discuss. A result obtained, it appears, after two months *passed* under the hands of three several persons — a performance that must be reckoned rather slow for a miracle, seeing that if we read certain passages aright, a mesmerizer "with a white hat and an illuminated profile, like a saint or an angel," is gifted with powers little, if at all, inferior to those of the old Apostles. The delay, moreover, throws a doubt on the source of the relief, for there are many diseases to which such an interval would allow of a natural remission.

In the curative process, the two most remarkable phenomena were — 1st, That the patient, with a weasel-like vigilance, did not go as usual into the magnetic sleep or trance: and, 2dly, That every glorified object before her was invested with a peculiar light, so that a bust of Isis burnt with a phosphoric splendor, and a black, dirty, Newcastle steam-tug shone with heavenly radiance. Appearances, for which we at once take the lady's word, but must decline her inference, that they had any influence in setting her on her legs again. The nerves, and the optic ones especially, were, no doubt, in a highly excited state: but that a five year old lameness derived any relaxation from that effulgence we will believe, when the broken heart of a soldier's widow is bound up by a general illumination. Indeed, we remember once to have been personally visited with such lights, that we saw two candles instead of one — but we decidedly walked the worse for it.

On the subject of other visionary appearances Miss Martineau is less explicit, or rather tantalizingly obscure; for after hinting that she has seen wonders above wonders, instead of favoring us with her Revelations or Mysteries, like Ainsworth or Eugene Sue, she plumply says that she means to keep them to herself.

"Between this condition and the mesmeric sleep there is a state, transient and rare, of which I have had experience, but of which I intend to give no account. A somnambule calls it a glimmering of the lights of somnambulism and clairvoyance. To me there appears nothing like glimmering in it. The ideas that I have snatched from it, and now retain, are, of all ideas which ever visited me, the most lucid and impressive. It may be well that they are incommunicable — partly from their nature and relations, and partly from their unfitness for translation into mere words. I will only say that the condition is one of no "nervous excitement," as far as experience and outward indications can be taken as a test. Such a state of repose, of calm, translucent intellectuality, I had never conceived of; and no reaction followed, no excitement but that which is natural to every one who finds himself in possession of a great new idea."

So that whether she obtained a glimpse of the New Jerusalem, or a peep into the World of Spirits, or saw the Old Gentleman himself, is left to wide conjecture. Our own guess, in the absence of all direction, is, that she enjoyed a mesmeric translation into another planet, and derived her great idea from the Man in the Moon.

This, however, is not the only suppression. For instance, it is said that one of the strongest powers of the girl J., the somnambulist, was the discernment of disease, its conditions and remedies; that she cleared up her own case first, prescribing for herself very fluently, and then medically advised Miss Martineau, and that the treatment in both cases succeeded. Surely, in common charity to the afflicted, these infallible remedies ought to have been published; their nature ought to have been indicated, if only to enable one to judge of supernatural prescribing compared with professional practice; but so profound a silence is preserved on these points as to lead to the inevitable conclusion, that the mesmeric remedies, like the quack medicines, are to be secured by patent, and to be sold at so much a family-bottle, stamp included. One recipe only transpires, of so commonplace and popular a character, and so little requiring inspiration for its invention, — so ludicrously familiar to wide-awake advisers, that our sides shake to record how Miss Martineau, restless and sleepless for want of her abandoned opiates, was ordered ale at dinner and brandy and water for a nightcap. Oh, J.! J.! well does thy initial stand also for Joker!

In addition to these suppressions, one unaccountable omission has certainly staggered us, as much as if we had considered it through a couple of bottles of wine. In common with ourselves our clever friend T. L., and many other persons — who all hear the music of the spheres, dumb-bells, and other mute melodies, as distinctly as the rest of the world, but of gross mundane sounds and noises are unconscious as the adder — Miss Martineau is very deaf, indeed. Here then was an obvious subject for experiment, and having been so easily cured of one infirmity, it seems only natural that it should have occurred to the patient to apply instanter to the same agency for relief from another disability — that she should have requested her mesmerizer to quicken her hearing as well as her pace. But on the contrary, her ears seem quite to have slipped out of her head; and at an advanced stage of the proceedings we find her awaiting J.'s revelations, "with an American friend repeating to her on the instant, on account of her deafness, every word as it fell." And to make the omission more glaring, it is in the midst of speculations on the mesmeric sharpening of another sense, till it can see through deal-boards, mill-stones, and "barricadoes as lustrous as ebony," that she neglects to ascertain whether her hearing might not be so improved as to perceive sounds through no denser medium than the common air! Such an interesting experiment in her own person ought surely to have preceded the trials whether "J." could see, and draw ships and churches, with her eyes shut; and the still more remote inquiry whether, at the day of judgment, we are to rise with or without our bodies, including the auricular organs. If dull people can be cured of stone-deafness by a few magnetic passes, so pleasant a fact ought not to be concealed; whatever the consequence to the proprietors of registered Voice Conductors and Cornets.

Along with this experiment, we should have been glad of more circumstantial references to many successful ones merely assumed and asserted. There is, indeed, nothing throughout the Letters more singular than the complacency with which we are expected to take disputed matters for granted; as if all her readers were in magnetic *rapport* with the authoress, thinking as she thinks, seeing as she sees, and believing as she believes. Thus the theory, that the mind of the somnambulist mirrors that of the mesmerizer, is declared to be pretty clearly

proved, "*when* an ignorant child, ignorant especially of the Bible, discourses of the Scriptures and divinity with a clergyman, and of the nebulæ with an astronomer;" and when perfectly satisfactory to the writer, but which sticks in our throat like its namesake, the English for *goître*. We should be delighted to know the whereabouts of that Wonderful Child and its caravan. And here are more whens: —

What becomes of really divine inspiration *when* the commonest people find they can elicit marvels of provision and insight? What becomes of the veneration for religious contemplation *when* ecstasies are found to be at the command of very unhallowed — wholly unauthorized hands? What becomes of the respect in which the medical profession ought to be held, *when* the friends of the sick and suffering, with their feelings all alive, see the doctor's skill and science overborne and set aside by means at the command of an ignorant neighbor, — means which are all ease and pleasantness? How can the profession hold its dominion over minds, however backed by law and the opinion of the educated, *when* the vulgar see and know that limbs are removed without pain, in opposition to the will of doctors, and in spite of their denial of the facts? What avails the decision of a whole College of Surgeons that such a thing could not be, *when* a whole town full of people know that it was? What becomes of the transmission of fluid *when* the mesmerist acts, without concert, on a patient a hundred miles off?

To all of which Echo answers "When?" — whilst another memorable one adds "Where?" In fact, had the letters been delivered as speeches, the orator would continually have been interrupted with such cries, and for "name! name!"

In the same style we are told that we need not quarrel about the name to be given to a power "that can make the deaf and dumb hear and speak; disperse dropsies, banish fevers, asthma, and paralysis, absorb tumors, and cause the severance of nerve, bone, and muscle to be unfelt. Certainly not, — nor about the name to be bestowed on certain newly-invented magnetic rings that have appeared simultaneously with the Newcastle letters, and are said to cure a great variety of diseases. We only object — as we should in passing a tradesman's accounts — to take mere items for facts that are unsupported by vouchers. But it is obvious throughout that Miss Martineau forgets she is not addressing magnetizers; instead of considering herself as telling a ghost-story to people who did not believe in apparitions, and consequently fortifying her

narrative with all possible evidence corroborative and circumstantial. This is evident from the trusting simplicity with which she relates all the freaks and fancies of the somnambulist J., in spite of their glaring absurdities and inconsistencies. For instance, her vocabulary is complained of, with its odd and vulgar phrases, so inferior to the high tone of her ideas, and the subjects of her discourse: whereas, like the child that talked of nebulæ and was put up to astronomical technicals, she ought to have used as refined language as her mesmerizer, the well-educated widow of a clergyman. So when a glass of proper magnetic-water was willed to be porter on her palate, she called it obliquely "a nasty sort of beer," when, reflecting the knowledge of her mesmerizer, she should have recognized it by name as well as by taste: and again, in the fellow experiment, when the water was willed to be sherry, she described it as "wine, white wine;" and moreover, on drinking half a tumbler, became so tipsy that she was afraid to rise from the chair or walk, or go down stairs, "for fear of falling and spoiling her face." The thing, however, was not original. Miss Martineau insinuates that mesmerism is much older than Mesmer; and in reality the reader will remember a sham Abram feast of the same kind in the Arabian Nights, where the Barmecide willed ideal mutton, barley-broth, and a fat goose with sweet sauce, — and how Shacabac, to humor his entertainer, got drunk on imaginary wine.

The whole interlude, indeed, in which J. figures, if not very satisfactory to the sceptical, is rather amusing. She is evidently an acute, brisk girl of nineteen, with a turn for fun, — "very fond of imitating the bagpipes" in her merry moods — and ready to go the whole Magnetic Animal, even to the "mesmerizing herself," — an operation as difficult, one would imagine, as self-tickling. She exhibits, in fact, a will of her own, and an independence, quite at variance with the usual subjection to a superior influence. She wakes at her own pleasure from her trances — is not so abstracted in them as to forget her household errands, that she has to go to the shop over the way — and without any mesmeric introduction gets into *rapport* with the music next door, which sets her mocking all the instruments of an orchestra, dancing, and describing the company in a ball-room. Another day, when one of the phrenological organs was affected, she was thrown into a paroxysm

of order, and was "almost in a frenzy of trouble because she could not make two pocket-handkerchiefs lay flat and measure the same size — all very good fun, and better than stitching or darning. But she preferred higher game. "I like to look up and see spiritual things. I can see diseases, and I like to see visions!" And accordingly she did see a vision — by what must be called Clairvoyance's long range — of a shipwreck, with all its details between Gottenburg and Elsinore.

This "inexplicable anecdote" Miss Martineau gives with the usual amiable reliance on the reader's implicit credence, declaring that she cannot discover any chink by which deception could creep in; whereas there is a gaping gap as practicable as any breach ever made by battery. To give any weight whatever to such a tale, two conditions are absolutely essential: that the intelligence should not have been received in the town; and that, if it had, the girl should have had no opportunity of hearing the news. And was this the case? By no means. On the contrary, J. *had been out on an errand*, and immediately on her return she was mesmerized, and related her vision; the news arriving by natural means, so simultaneously with the revelation, that she presently observed, "My aunt is below telling them all about it, and I shall hear all about it when I go down." To be expected to look on a maid of Newcastle as a she-Ezekiel, on such terms, really confirms us in an opinion we have gradually been forming, that Miss Martineau never in her life looked at a human gullet by the help of a table-spoon.

In justice, however, it must be said, that the latter writer gives credit as freely as she requires it; witness the vision just referred to, which it is confidently said was impossible to be known by ordinary means, coupled with an equally rash assertion that the girl had not seen her aunt, "the only person (in all Newcastle!) from whom tidings of the shipwreck could be obtained." The truth is, with a too easy faith, Miss Martineau greatly underrates the mischievous propensities and wicked capabilities of human nature. She says:

"I am certain that it is not in human nature to keep up for seven weeks, without slip or trip, a series of deceptions so multifarious; and I should say so of a perfect stranger, as confidently as I say it of this girl, whom I know to be incapable of deception, as much from the character of her intellect as of her *morale*."

It is certain, nevertheless, that Mary Tofts, the Rabbit-breeder, Ann Moore, the Fasting Woman of Tutbury, Scratching Fanny, and other impostors, young and old, exhibited extraordinary patience and painful perseverance in their deceptions combined with an art and cunning that deluded doctors medical, spiritual, and lexicographical, with many people of quality of both sexes. These, it is true, were all superstitious or credulous persons, who believed all they could get to believe; and what else are those individuals now-a-days, who hold that Mesmerism is as ancient as the Delphian Oracle, and that Witchcraft was one of its forms? In common consistency such a faith ought to go all lengths with the American Sea Serpent, the whole breath of the Kraken, and not believe by halves in the Merman and the Mermaid.

"MY BETTER HALF."

In one thing we cordially agree with Miss Martineau, namely, in repudiating the cant about prying into the mysteries of Providence, perfectly convinced that what is intended to be hidden from us will remain as hermetically sealed as the secrets of the grave. The Creator himself has implanted in man an inquisitive spirit, with faculties for research, which He obviously intended to be exercised, by leaving for its discovery so many important powers — for instance, the properties of the loadstone — essential to human comfort and progress, instead of making them subjects of special revelation. Let man then, divinely supplied with intellectual deep

sea-lines, industriously fathom all mysteries within their reach. What we object to is, that so many charts are empirically laid down without his taking proper soundings, and to his pronouncing off-hand, without examination by the plummet, that the bottom of a strange coast is rock, mud, stone, sand, or shells. Thus it is that in Mesmerism we have so much rash assertion on one hand, and point blank contradiction on the other. To pass over such subtleties as the existence of an invisible magnetic fluid, and the mode of magnetic action, there is the broad problem, whether a man's leg can be lopped off as unconsciously as the limb of a tree? That such a question should remain in dispute or doubt, in spite of our numerous hospitals and their frequent operations, is disgraceful to all parties. But speculation seems to be preferred to proof. Thus Miss Martineau talks confidently of such painless amputations; yet, with a somnambulist at her fingers'-ends, never assures herself by the prick of a pin, of the probability of the fact. Nay, she is very angry with an Experimentalist who tried to satisfy himself of the reality of J.'s insensibility by a sudden alarm, without giving notice that he was going to surprise her; a violation, it seems, of the first rule of mesmeric practice, but certainly according to the rules of common sense.

"Another incident is noteworthy in this connection. A gentleman was here one evening, who was invited in all good faith, on his declaration that he had read all that had been written on Mesmerism, knew all about it, and was philosophically curious to witness the phenomena. He is the only witness we have had who abused the privilege. I was rather surprised to see how, being put in communication with J., he wrenched her arm, and employed usage which would have been cruelly rough in her ordinary state; but I supposed it was because he 'knew all about it,' and found that she was insensible to his rudeness; and her insensibility was so obvious, that I hardly regretted it. At length, however, it became clear that his sole idea was (that which is the sole idea of so many who cannot conceive of what they cannot explain,) of detecting shamming; and, in pursuance of this aim, this gentleman, who 'knew all about it,' violated the first rule of mesmeric practice, by suddenly and violently seizing the sleeper's arm, without the intervention of the Mesmerist. J. was convulsed, and writhed in her chair. At that moment, and while supposing himself *en rapport* with her, he shouted out to me that the house was on fire. Happily, this brutal assault on her nerves failed entirely. There was

certainly nothing congenial in the *rapport*. She made no attempt to rise from her seat, and said nothing, — clearly heard nothing; and when asked what had frightened her, said something cold had got hold of her. Cold indeed! and very hard too!"

In the mean time how many sufferers there are, probably, male and female, afflicted with cancers and diseased limbs, who are looking towards mesmerism for relief, and anxiously asking, is it true that a breast can be removed as painlessly as its boddice; or a leg cut off, and perhaps put on again — why not, by such a miraculous agency? — without the knowledge of its great or little toe? Such inquirers ought at once to have their doubts resolved, for, as we all know, there is nothing more cruel, when such issues are at stake, than to be kept dangling in a state of uncertainty.

SUSPENSE.

On the subject of itinerant mesmerists Miss Martineau is very earnest, and roundly denounces the profane fellows, who make no scruple of "playing upon the nerves and brains of human beings, exhibiting for money, on a stage, states of mind and soul held too sacred in olden times to be elicited elsewhere than in temples by the hands of the priests of the gods!"

"While the wise, in whose hands this power should be, as the priesthood to whom scientific mysteries are consigned by Providence, scornfully decline their high function, who are they that snatch at it, in sport or mischief, — and always in ignorance?

School children, apprentices, thoughtless women who mean no harm, and base men who do mean harm. Wherever itinerant Mesmerists have been are there such as these, throwing each other into trances, trying funny experiments, getting fortunes told, or rashly treating diseases.

. . . . . .

"Thus are human passions and human destinies committed to reckless hands, for sport or abuse. No wonder if somnambules are made into fortune-tellers, — no wonder if they are made into prophets of fear, malice, and revenge, by reflecting in their somnambulism the fear, malice, and revenge of their questioners; — no wonder if they are made even ministers of death, by being led from sick-bed to sick-bed in the dim and dreary alleys of our towns, to declare which of the sick will recover, and which will die!

. . . . . .

"If I were to speak as a moralist on the responsibility of the *savans* of society to the multitude — if I were to unveil the scenes which are going forward in every town in England, from the wanton, sportive, curious, or mischievous use of this awful agency by the ignorant, we should hear no more levity in high places about Mesmerism."

A statement strangely at variance with the following dictum, which as strangely makes Morality still moral, whatever her thoughts or her postures — and whether controlled by the volition of "thoughtless women who mean no harm," or "base men who do mean harm."

"The volitions of the Mesmerist may actuate the movements of the patient's limbs, and suggest the material of his ideas; but they seem unable to touch his *morale*. In this state the *morale* appears supreme, as it is rarely found in the ordinary condition."

We can well understand the "social calamity" apprehended from a promiscuous use of the ulterior powers of mesmerism. But what class, we must ask, is to arrogate to itself and monopolize the exercise of miraculous powers, alien to, if not identical with, those bestowed aforetime on certain itinerant apostles? An inspired fisherman will prescribe as safely, prophesy as correctly, and see visions as clearly, as an inspired doctor of medicine or divinity. There seems to be, in the dispensation of the marvellous gift, no distinction of persons. Miss Martineau's maid mesmerizes her as effectually as Mr.

Hall; and J. owes her first magnetic sleep, and all its benecial results on her health and inflamed eyes, to the passes of the maid of the clergyman's widow. A domestic concatenation that suggests to us a curious kitchen picture — and an illustrative letter.

DOMESTIC MESMERISM.

To Mary Smash, at No 1, *Chaney Walk, Chelsea.*

DEAR MARY, —

This cums hoping yure well, and to advize you to larn Mismerising. Its dun with yure Hands, and is as easy as taking sites at Pepel, or talking on yure fingers. If I was nigh you, I'd larn you in no time to make Passes, witch is only pawing, like, without touchin, at sumboddys face or back, witch gives them a tittevating feeling on the galvanic nerves, And then off they go into a Trance in a giffy, and talk in their sleep like Orators, I should say Oracles, and anser watever you ax. Whereby you may get yure Fortin told, and find out other fokes sweatharts & luve secrets, And dis-

kiver Theaves better than by Bible & Key, And have yure inward Disorders told, & wats good for them. Sukey's was the indigestibles, and to take as much rubbub as would hide a shillin. All witch is done by means of the sombulist, thats the sleeper, seeing through every think quite transparent, in their Trance, as is called Clare Voying, so that they can pint out munny hid under the Erth, & burried bones, & springs of water, and vanes of mettle, & menny things besides.

Yesterdy I was mismerized meself into a Trance, & clare voyed the chork Gout in John's stomack as plane as Margit Clifts. So I prescribed him to take Collyflower, witch by rites should have been Collycinth, but I forgot the propper word. Howsumever he did eat two large ones, and promises to cum round.

It would make you split your sides with laffing to see me mismerize our Thomas & make him go into all sorts of odd postures & anticks & capers Like a Dotterel, for watever I do he must coppy to the snapping of a finger, and cant object to nuthing for as the song says I've got his Will and his Power. Likewise you can make the Sombulist taste watever you think propper, so I give him mesmerized Warter witch at my Command is transmoggrified on his pallet to Shampain & makes him as drunk as Old Gooseberry and then he will jump Jim Crow, or go down on his bended knees and confess all his peckaddillos Witch is as diverten as reading the Misteries of Parris.

The wust to mismerize is Reuben the Cotchman, not that hes too wakeful, for hes generally beery, And goes off like a shot, but he wont talk in his sleep, only snores.

The Page is more passable and very clarevoying. He have twice seed a pot of goold in the middle flower-bed. But the gardner wont have it dug up. And he says theres a skelliton bricked into the staircase wall, so that we never dares at nite to go up alone. Also he sees Visions and can profesy and have foretold two Earthquacks and a grate Pleg.

Cook wants to mismerize too but wat with her being so much at the fire and her full habbit she always goes off to sleep afore the Sombulist. But Sukey can do it very well. Tho in great distress about Mrs. Hardin's babby witch Sukey offered to mismerize in loo of surrup of Poppies or Godfrey's Cordial, but the pore Innocent wont wake up agin, nor havent

for two hole days. As would be a real blessin to Muthers and Nusses in a moderate way, but mite be carried too far, and require a Crowners Quest. As yet thats the only Trial we have made out of the House, But we mean to mismerize the Baker, and get out of him who he really does mean to offer to, for he is quite a General Lover.

Sum pepel is very dubbius about Mismerizing, and sum wont have it at any price; but Missis is for it, very strong, and says she means to believe every attom about it till sumboddy proves quite the reverse. She practises making passes every day, and is studdyin Frenology besides, for she says between the two you may play on pepel's pennycraniums like a Piany, and put them into any Key you like. And of course her fust performance will be a Master piece on the Head of the Fammily.

To be shure it seems a wonderful power to be give to one over ones Fellow Creturs, and as mite be turned to Divilish purposes But witch I cant stop to pint out, for makin the beds. To tell the truth, with so much Mismerizing going on, our Wurks has got terrible behind hand And the carpits has not been swep for a week. So no more at present in haste from

Your luving Friend
ELIZA PASSMORE.

P. S. A most remarkable Profesy! The Page have foretold that the Monkey some day would bite Missis, & lo! and behold he have flone at her, and made his teeth meet in her left ear. If that ant profesying I dont know what is.

A JACKO-BITE.

THE ECHO.

[March, 1845.]

We can hardly congratulate our readers on presenting them, this month, with an effigy of Thomas Hood's outward features, instead of that portraiture of his mind, and those traces of his kindly heart, which he has been wont, with his own pen, to draw in these pages. And we lament still more that we must add a regret to the disappointment of our readers, by communicating to them the sad tidings that the aching original of that pictured brow is again laid low by dangerous illness — again scarred (to borrow an expression of his own) "by the crooked autograph of pain." Through many a previous paroxysm of his malady, when life and death hung trembling in the balance, Mr. Hood has worked on steadily for our instruction and amusement; throwing, often, into a humorous chapter, or impassioned poem, the power which was needed to restore exhausted nature. During the last month, however, his physical strength has completely given way: and, almost as much through incapacity of his hand to hold the pen, as of his brain for any length of time to guide it, he has at last been compelled to desist from composition. Those in whom admiration of the writer has induced also a friendly feeling towards the man, will have some consolation in learning that amidst his sufferings, which have been severe, his cheerful philosophy has never failed him; but that around his sick-bed, as in his writings, and in his life, he has known how to lighten the melancholy of those around him, and to mingle laughter with their tears. We have thought it due to our readers and to the public thus briefly to make known that Mr. Hood is more seriously ill than even *he* has ever been before; avoiding to express any hopes or forebodings of our own, or to prejudge the uncertain issues of life and death.

With respect to the portrait, it is due to Mr. Davis to state that the bust from which it is taken is a faithful and striking likeness, not merely of the *form*, but what is far more rare

and difficult to be attained, of the *character* and *expression* of the features. The execution of the engraving exemplifies strikingly the advantages of Mr. Talbot's invention of the calotype, in the skilful hands of Mr. Collins, as a means of obtaining at small cost perfectly accurate copies of works of art, especially of sculpture. It is impossible to conceive anything more faithful to the original, or more agreeable, as well in tone and color, as for its accuracy of form and shadowing, than the calotype from which our engraving was made. The engraving itself is finely executed; but no fac-simile made by the burin can ever equal the delicate handwriting of the Sun. We can hardly conceive a more desirable, or, for its intrinsic value, a cheaper acquisition in the way of art, than a collection of copies of the finest ancient and modern sculpture, thus taken by the infallible "Pencil of Nature."

W.

MY TRACT.*

MADAM, —

I have received your pious billet-doux, but have little leisure, and less inclination for a religious flirtation, and what (according to our Law and Police Reports) is its usual issue — a decidedly serious intrigue. How else, indeed, am I to interpret the mysterious "object" of your late visit, which you significantly tell me, was defeated by your being unintentionally accompanied by a friend? — how answer for her designs on a man's person, who can take such liberties with his soul? The presence of a companion could not of course stand in the way of your giving me a tract or a letter or anything proper for a modest woman to offer; but where can be the womanly modesty, or delicacy, or decency of a female, who intrudes on a man's private house, and private correspondence, and his most private affairs, those of his heart and soul, with as much masculine assurance as if she wore Paul Pry's inexpressibles under her petticoats? Perhaps I have to congratulate myself, as Joseph Andrews did on the preservation of his virtue from that amorous widow, Lady Booby! But whatever impropriety you intended to commit has been providentially frustrated, it appears, by the intrusion of the young lady in question, to whom, therefore, I beg you will present my most grateful and special thanks. I am as you know, a married man, and do not care to forget that character, only that I may be able to say afterwards, as you suggest, "*I have gone astray*, but now I have learned thy righteous law."

The cool calculations you have indulged in on my desperate health, probable decease, and death-bed perturbations must have afforded you much Christian amusement, as your ignorance must have derived infinite comfort from your convic-

* Addressed to a lady who had addressed to him an attack on his writings and religious opinions, and who had inquired what good his "Whims and Oddities would do his soul? and how he would recall his levities in literature upon his death-bed?"

tion of the inutility of literature, and all intellectual pursuits. And even your regrets over the "Whims and Oddities, that have made thousands laugh" may be alleviated, if you will only reflect that Fanaticism has caused millions to shed blood as well as tears; a tolerable set-off against my levities. For my own part, I thank God, I have used the talents He has bestowed on me in so cheerful a spirit, and not abused them by writing the profane stuff called pious poetry, nor spiritualized my prose by stringing together Scriptural phrases, which have become the mere slang of a religious swell mob. Such impieties and blasphemies I leave to the Evangelical and Elect; to the sacrilegious quacks, who pound up equal parts of Bible and Babble, and convert wholesome food, by their nauseous handling, into filthiest physic; to the Canters, who profane all holy names and things by their application to common and vulgar uses; and to the presumptuous women, who, I verily believe with the Turks, have no souls of their own to mend, and therefore set themselves to patch and cobble the souls of the other gender.

It is, I know, the policy of your faction to decry literature, which they abhor as the Devil hates Gospel. And for a similar reason. For all the most celebrated authors, the wisest, and most learned in the ways of mankind, Scott, Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, Crabbe, Addison, Butler, Pope, Moore, Burns, Byron, Molière, Voltaire, Boileau, and a host of others, have concurred in denouncing and exposing Tartuffes, Mawworms, Cantwells, Puritans, in short sanctimonious folly and knavery of every description. Such writers I know would be called scoffers and infidels; but a Divine Hand, incapable of injustice, has drawn a full-length picture of a self-righteous Pharisee; and Holy Lips, prone to all gentleness and charity, have addressed their sharpest rebukes to Spiritual Pride and Religious Hypocrisy. Are the sacrilegious animals aware that in their retaliations, they are kicking even at *Him*?

In behalf of our literature I will boldly say that to our lay authors it is mainly owing, that the country is not at this hour enthralled by Priestcraft, Superstition, and if you please, Popery, which by the by, has met with more efficient opponents in Dante, Boccaccio, and Rabelais (profane writers, madam), than in all the M'Neiles, M'Ghees, and Macaws, that have screamed within Exeter Hall.

As for literature "palling on my soul in my dying hour," — on the contrary it has been my solace and comfort through the extremes of worldly trouble and sickness, and has maintained me in a cheerfulness, a perfect sunshine of the mind, seldom seen on the faces of the most prosperous and healthy of your sect, who, considering that they are as sure of going to Heaven as the "poor Indian's dog," are certainly more melancholy dogs than they ought to be! But what else can come of chanting "pious chansons," with hell-fire burdens, that to my taste, fit them particularly for contributions to the Devil's Album? Some such verses you have sent me, and I could return you others quite as religious — but unfortunately written by a minister, who, after being expelled in disgrace from a public foundation in London, went and robbed a Poor Savings Bank in the country.

Such literature may indeed appal the soul at the hour of death, and such an author may justly dread an Eternal Review. Again, therefore, I thank God that my pen has not been devoted to such serious compositions, that I have never profaned his holy name with commonplace jingles, or passed off the inspirations of presumption, vanity, or hypocrisy, for devout effusions. My humble works have flowed from my heart, as well as my head, and, whatever their errors, are such as I have been able to contemplate with composure, when, more than once, the Destroyer assumed almost a visible presence. For I have stood several times in that serious extremity both by land and sea — yet, for all my near approaches to the other world, I have never pretended to catch glimpses of its heaven, or of its hell, or to have had intimations of who among my neighbors were on the road to one place or the other. Such special revelations are reserved, it seems, by a Wisdom, certainly inscrutable, for the worst or weakest of the weaker sex, such cackling hen-prophetesses as its Southcotes, its G——s, and its L——s.

And verily if they be the Righteous, I am content to be the Lefteous of the species.

It has pleased you to picture me occasionally in such extremities as those just alluded to, — and, no doubt, with regret that you could not, Saint-like, beset my couch, to try spiritual experiments on my soul, and enjoy its excruciations, as certain brutal anatomists have gloated on the last agonies of mutilated

dogs and rabbits. But we will now turn, if you please, from my death-bed to your own — supposing you to be lying there at that awful crisis, which reveals the depravity of the human heart as distinctly as the mortality of the human frame! And now, on that terrible, narrow isthmus between the past and the future, just imagine yourself appealing to your conscience for answers to such solemn questions as follow. And first, whether your extreme devotion has been affected or sincere, — unobtrusive or ostentatious, — humble to your Creator, but arrogant to His creatures — in short, Piety or Mag-piety? Whether your professed love for your species has been active and fruitful, or only that flatulent charity, which evaporates upwards in wind, and catechises the hungry, and preaches to the naked? And finally, how far, in meddling with the spiritual concerns of your neighbors, you have neglected your own; and, consequently, what you may have to dread from that Hell and its fires, which you have so often amused yourself with letting off at a poor Sinner, — just as a boy would squib a Guy? These are queries important to your "eternal destiny," which ought to be considered in time; whereas, from the tenor of your letter, it appears to me that you have never entertained them for a moment, and I am sorry to add that, judging from the same evidence, whatever may be your acquaintance with the *letter* of the New Testament, of its *spirit* you are as deplorably ignorant as the blindest heathen Hottentot, for whose enlightenment you perhaps subscribe a few Missionary pence.

I implore you to spend a few years, say twenty, in this self-scrutiny, which may be wholesomely varied by the exercise of a little active benevolence; not, however, in sending tracts, instead of baby-linen to poor lying-in sisters, or in volunteering pork-chops for distressed Jews, or in recommending a Solemn Fast to the Spitalfields weavers, or in coddling and pampering a pulpit favorite, but in converting rags to raiment, and empty stomachs to full ones, and in helping the wretched and indigent to "keep their souls and bodies together!"

And, should you ever relapse and feel tempted to write religious Swing letters, such as you have sent to me, let me recommend to you a quotation from a great and wise writer, and moreover a namesake of your pious mother. It runs thus, — "*I find you are perfectly qualified to make converts, and so, go, help your mother make the gooseberry pie.*"

Still if you will and must indite such epistles, pray address them elsewhere. There are plenty of young single "men about town" (and of the very sort such saints are partial to — namely, "*precious*" sinners) who no doubt would be willing to discuss with you their "experiences," and to embrace you and your persuasion together. But on me your pains would be wasted. I am not to be converted, except *from* Christianity, by arrogance, insolence, and ignorance enough, as Mrs. Jarley says, "to make one turn atheist." Indeed, the only effect of your letter has been to inspire me, like old Tony Weller, with a profound horror of widows, whether amorous or pious, for both seem equally resolute that a man shall not "call his soul his own."

And now, Madam, farewell. Your mode of recalling yourself to my memory reminds me that your fanatical mother insulted mine in the last days of her life (which was marked by every Christian virtue), by the presentation of a Tract addressed to Infidels. I remember also that the same heartless woman intruded herself, with less reverence than a Mohawk Squaw would have exhibited, on the chamber of death; and interrupted with her jargon almost my very last interview with my dying parent. Such reminiscences warrant some severity; but, if more be wanting, know that my poor sister has been excited by a circle of Canters like yourself, into a religious frenzy, and is at this moment in a private mad-house.

I am, Madam,

Yours with disgust,

THOS. HOOD.

COPYRIGHT AND COPYWRONG.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ATHENÆUM.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SIR, —

I have read with much satisfaction the occasional exposures in your journal of the glorious uncertainty of the Law of Copyright, and your repeated calls for its revision. It is high time, indeed, that some better system should be established; and I cannot but regret that the legislature of our own country which patronizes the great cause of liberty all over the world, has not taken the lead in protecting the common rights of literature. We have a national interest in each; and their lots ought not to be cast asunder.

The French, Prussian, and American governments, however, have already got the start of us, and are concerting measures for suppressing these piracies, which have become like the influenza, so alarmingly prevalent?

It would appear from the facts established, that an English book merely *transpires* in London; but is *published* in Paris, Brussels, or New York.

> "'T is but to sail, and with to-morrow's sun,
> The pirates will be *bound*."

Mr. Bulwer tells us of a literary gentleman, who felt himself under the necessity of occasionally going abroad to preserve his self-respect; and with some change, an author will be equally obliged to repair to another country to enjoy his circulation.

As to the American reprints, I can personally corroborate your assertion that heretofore a trans-atlantic bookseller "has taken 500 copies of a single work," whereas he now orders

none, or merely a solitary one to set up from. This, I hope, is a matter as important as the little question of etiquette, which, according to Mr. Cooper, the fifty millions will have to adjust.

Before, however, any international arrangements be entered into, it seems only consistent with common sense that we should begin at home, and first establish what copyright *is* in Britain, and provide for its protection from native pirates or *book*-aneers. I have learned therefore with pleasure that the state of the law is to be brought under the notice of Parliament by Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, who from his legal experience and literary tastes is so well qualified for the task. The grievances of authors have neither been loudly nor often urged on Lords and Commons; but their claims have long been lying on the library table, if not on the table of the House, and methinks their wrongs have only to be properly stated to obtain redress. I augur for them, at least, a good hearing, for such seldom and low-toned appeals ought to find their way to organs "as deaf to clamor" as the old citizen of Cheapside, who said that "the more noise there was in the street, the more he did n't hear it." In the mean time as an author myself, as well as a proprietor of copyrights in "a small way," I make bold to offer my own feelings and opinions on the subject, with some illustrations from what, although not a decidedly serious writer, I will call "my experiences." And here I may appropriately plead an apology for taking on myself the cause of a fraternity of which I am so humble a member; but in truth, this very position, which forbids vanity on my account, favors my pride on that of others, and thus enables me to speak more becomingly of the deserts of my brethren and the dignity of the craft. Like P. P. the clerk of the Parish, who, with a proper reverence for his calling, confessed an elevation of mind in only considering himself as a shred of the linen vestment of Aaron, I own to an inward exultation at being but a Precentor, as it were, in that worship which numbers Shakespeare and Milton among its priests. Moreover now that the rank of authors, and the nature, and value, of literary property are about to be discussed, and I hope established forever, it becomes the duty of every Literary Man, as much as of a Peer, when his order is in question, to assert his station, and to stand up manfully for the rights, honors, and privileges of the profession to which he belongs.

The question is not a mere sordid one, it is not a simple inquiry, in what way the emoluments of literature may be best secured to the author or proprietor of a work; on the contrary, it involves a principle of grave importance, not only to literary men, but to those who love letters, and I will presume to say to society at large.

It has a moral as well as a commercial bearing; for the legislature will not only have to decide *directly* by a formal act, whether the Literary Interest is worthy of a place beside the Shipping Interest, the Funded Interest, the Manufacturing and other public Interests, but also it will have *indirectly* to determine whether literary men belong to the privileged class; the higher, lower, or middle class, — the working-class, — productive or unproductive class, or in short, to any class at all.* "Literary men," says Mr. Bulwer, "have not, with us, any fixed and settled position as men of letters." We have, like Mr. Cooper's American lady, no precedence.

We are, in fact, nobodies. Our place, in turf language, is "nowhere." Like certain birds and beasts of difficult classification, — we go without any at all. We have no more Caste than the Pariahs. We are on a par, according as we are scientific, theologic, imaginative, dramatic, poetic, historic, instructive, or amusing, — with quack-doctors, street-preachers, strollers, ballad-singers, hawkers of last dying speeches, Punch and Judies, conjurers, tumblers, and other "divarting vagabonds." We are as the Jews in the east, the Africans in the west, or the Gypsies anywhere. We belong to those, to whom nothing can belong. I have even misgivings, — Heaven help us! — if an author have a Parish!

I have serious doubts if a work be a qualification for the workhouse! The law, apparently, cannot forget or forgive, that Homer was a vagrant, Shakespeare a deer-stealer, and Milton a rebel. Our very "cracks" tell against us in the statute, — Poor Stoneblind, Bill the Poacher, and Radical Jack have been the ruin of our gang. We have neither character to lose nor property to protect. We are, by law, outlaws, — undeserving of civil rights. We may be robbed, libelled, outraged with impunity: being at the same time liable for such offences, to all the rigor of the code.

* At a guess, I should say we were classed, in opposition to a certain political sect, as Inutilitarians.

I will not adduce, as I could do, a long catalogue of the victims of this system, which seems to have been drawn up by the "Lord of Misrule," and sanctioned by the "Abbot of Unreason." I will select, as Sterne took his captive, a single author. To add to the parallel, behold him in a prison! He is sentenced to remain there during the monarch's pleasure, to stand three times in the pillory, and to be amerced besides in the heavy sum of two hundred marks. The sufferer of this threefold punishment is one rather deserving of a triple crown, as a man, as an author, and as an example of that rare commercial integrity which does not feel discharged of its debts, though creditors have accepted a composition, till it has paid them in full. It is a literary offence, — a libel or presumed libel, which has incurred the severity of the law; but the same power that oppresses him refuses or neglects to support him in the protection of his literary character and his literary rights. His just fame is depreciated by public slanderers, and his honest, honorable earnings are forestalled by pirates.

Of one of his performances no less than twelve surreptitious editions are printed, and 80,000 copies are disposed of at a cheap rate in the streets of London. I am writing no fiction, though of one of Fiction's greatest masters. That captive is, — for he can never die, — that captive author is Scott's, Johnson's, Blair's, Marmontel's, Lamb's, Chalmers's, Beattie's, — good witnesses to character these! — every Englishman's, Britain's, America's, Germany's, France's, Spain's, Italy's, Arabia's, all the world's Daniel De Foe! Since the age of the author of "Robinson Crusoe," the law has doubtless altered in complexion, but not in character, towards his race. It no longer pillories an author who writes to the distaste — or, like poor Daniel, above the comprehension — of the powers that be, because it no longer pillories any one, — but the imprisonment and the fines remain in force. The title of a book is, in legal phrase, the worst title there is.

Literary property is the lowest in the market. It is declared by the law only so many years' purchase, after which the private right becomes common; and in the mean time the estate, being notoriously infested with poachers, is as remarkably unprotected by game laws. An author's winged thoughts, though laid, hatched, bred, and fed within his own domain,

are less his property, than is the bird of passage that of the lord of the manor, on whose soil it may happen to alight. An author cannot employ an armed keeper to protect his preserves; he cannot apply to a pinder to arrest the animals that trespass on his grounds; nay, he cannot even call in a common constable to protect his purse on the king's highway! I have had thoughts myself of seeking the aid of a policeman, but counsel, learned in the law, have dissuaded me from such a course; there was no way of defending myself from the petty thief but by picking my own pocket! Thus I have been compelled to see my own name attached to catch-penny works, none of mine, hawked about by placard-men in the street — I, who detest the puffing system, have apparently been guilty of the gross forwardness of walking the pavement by proxy for admirers, like the dog Bashaw! I have been made, nominally, to ply at stage-coach windows with my wares, like Isaac Jacobs with his cheap pencils, and Jacob Isaacs, with his cheap penknives to cut them with: — and without redress. For whether I had placed myself in the hands of the law, or taken the law in mine own hands — as any bumpkin in a barn knows — there is nothing to be thrashed out of a man of straw. Now, with all humility, if my poor name be any recommendation of a book, I conceive I am entitled to reserve it for my own benefit. What says the proverb? "When your name is up you may lie abed." But what says the law? — at least if the owner of the name be an author. Why, that any one may steal his bed from under him, and sell it; that is to say, his reputation, and the revenue which it may bring.

In the mean time, for any street frauds there is a summary process: the vendor of a flash watch, or a razor made to sell, though he appropriates no maker's name, is seized without any ceremony by A 1, carried before B 2, and committed to C 3, as regularly as a child goes through its alphabet and numeration. They have defrauded the public, forsooth, and the public has its prompt remedy; but for the literary man, thus doubly robbed, of his money and his reputation, what is his redress but by injunction, or action, against walking shadows? — a truly homœopathic remedy, which pretends to cure by aggravating the disease.

I have thus shown how an author may be robbed; for if

the works thus offered at an unusually low price be genuine, they must have been dishonestly obtained, — the brooms were stolen ready-made; if, on the contrary, they be counterfeit, I apprehend there will be little difficulty in showing how an author may be practically libelled with impunity. For anything I know, the peripatetic philosophy, ascribed to me by the above itinerants, might be heretical, damnable, libellous, vicious, or obscene; whilst for anything they know to the contrary, the purchasers must have held me responsible for the contents of the volumes, which went abroad so very publicly under my name. I know, indeed, that parties, thus deceived, have expressed their regret and astonishment that I could be guilty of such prose, verse, and worse, as they have met with under my signature. I believe I may cite the well-known Mr. George Robins, as a purchaser of one of the counterfeits; and if he, perhaps, eventually knocked me down as a street-preacher of infidelity, sedition, or immorality, it was neither his fault nor mine.

I may here refer, *en passant*, — for illustrations are plenty as blackberries, — to a former correspondence in the "Athenæum," in which I had, in common with Mr. Poole and the late Mr. Colman, to disclaim any connection with a periodical in which I was advertised as a contributor. There was more recently, and probably still is, one Marshall, of Holborn-bars, who publicly claims me as a writer in his pay, with as much right to the imprint of my name, as a print-collector has to the engravings in another man's portfolio: but against this man I have taken no rash steps, otherwise called legal, knowing that I might as well appeal to Martial law, *versus* Marshall, as to any other.

As a somewhat whimsical case, I may add the following. Mr. Chappell, the music-seller, agreed to give me a liberal sum for the use of any ballad I may publish: and another party, well known in the same line, applied to me for a formal permission to publish a little song of mine which a lady had done me the honor of setting to an original melody. Here seemed to be a natural recognition of copyright, and the moral sense of justice standing instead of law. But in the mean time, a foreign composer — I forget his name, but it was set in G——, took a fancy to some of my verses, and without the semiquaver of a right, or the demi-semiquaver of an apology,

converted them to his own use. I remonstrated of course; and the reply, based on the assurance of impunity, not only admitted the fact, but informed me that Monsieur, not finding my lines agree with his score, had taken the liberty of altering them at any risk. Now I would confidently appeal to the highest poets in the land, whether they do not feel it quite responsibility enough to be accountable for their own lays in the mother tongue; but to be answerable also for the attempts in English verse by a foreigner — and, above all, a Frenchman — is really too much of a bad thing!

Would it not be too much to request of the learned Sergeant, who has undertaken our cause, that he would lay these cases before Parliament? Noble Lords and Honorable Gentlemen come down to their respective Houses, in a fever of nervous excitement, and shout of "Privilege! privilege! Breach of privilege!" because their speeches have been erroneously reported or their meaning garbled in perhaps a single sentence; but how would they relish to see whole speeches — nay, pamphlets — they had never uttered or written, paraded, with their names, styles, and titles at full length, by those placarding walkers, who like fathers of lies, or rather mothers of them, carry one staring falsehood pick-a-back, and another at the bosom? How would those gentlemen like to see extempore versions of their orations done in English by a native of Paris, and published, as the pig ran, "down all sorts of streets"? Yet to similar nuisances are authors exposed without adequate means of abating them. It is often better, I am told, to abandon one's rights than to defend them at law — a sentence that will bear particular application to literary grievances. For instance, the law would have something to say to a man who claimed his neighbor's umbrella as his own parasol, because he had cut a bit off round the rim; yet by something of a similar process, the better part of a book may be appropriated: and this is so *civil* an offence, that any satisfaction at the law is only to be obtained by a very costly and doubtful course. There was even a piratical work which — to adopt Burke's paradoxical style — disingenuously ingenuous and dishonestly honest, assumed the plain title of "The Thief," professing with the connivance of the law, to steal all its materials. How this thief died, I know not; but as it was a literary thief, I would lay long odds that the law

was not the finisher. These piracies are naturally most injurious to those authors whose works are of a fugitive nature, or on topics of temporary interest; but there are writers of a more solid stamp, of a higher order of mind, or nobler ambition, who devote themselves to the production of works of permanent value and utility. Such works often creep but slowly into circulation and repute, and then become classics forever. And what encouragement and reward does the law hold forth to such contributors to our standard national literature? Why that after a certain lapse of years, coinciding probably with the term requisite to establish the sterling character of the work, or at least to establish its general recognition; then — aye, just then, when the literary property is realized, when it becomes exchangeable against the precious metals, which are considered by some political, and more practical, economists as the standard of value — the law decrees that then all right or interest in the book shall expire in the author, and by some strange process, akin to the Hindoo transmigrations, revive in the great body of the booksellers. And here arises a curious question. After the copyright has so lapsed, suppose that some speculative publisher, himself an amateur writer, extenuate or aggravate his arguments — French-polish his style — Johnsonize his phraseology — or even like Winifred Jenkins, wrap his own "bit of nonsense under his honor's kiver;" is there any legal provision extant to which the injured party could appeal for redress of such an outrage on all that is left to him, his reputation? I suspect there is none whatever. There is yet another singular result from this state of the law, which I beg leave to illustrate by my own case.

If I may modestly appropriate a merit, it is that, whatever faults I have, at least I have been a decent writer. In a species of composition, where, like the *ignis fatuus* that guides into a bog, a glimmer of the ludicrous is apt to lead the fancy into an indelicacy, I feel some honest pride in remembering that the reproach of impurity has never been cast upon me by my judges. It has not been my delight to exhibit the Muse, as it has been tenderly called "high kilted" — I have had my gratification therefore in seeing my little volumes placed in the hands of boys and girls, and as I have children of my own to, I hope, survive me, I have the inexpressible comfort of think-

ing that hereafter they will be able to cast their eyes over the pages inscribed with my name, without a burning blush on their young cheeks to reflect that the author was their father. So whispers Hope, with the dulcet voice and the golden hair; but what thunders Law, of the iron tone and the frizzled wig? "Decent as thy Muse may now be — a *delicate* Ariel — she shall be indecent and indelicate hereafter! She shall class with the bats and the fowls obscene! The slow reward of thy virtue shall be the same as the prompt punishment of vice — Thy copyright shall depart from thee, it shall be everybody's, and anybody's, and no man shall call it his own!"

Verily, if such be the proper rule of copyright, for the sake of consistency two very old copywriters should be altered to match, and run thus: —

"Virtue is its own punishment."
"Age commands disrespect."

To return to the author whose fame is slow and sure to be — its own reward; should he be dependent, as is often the case, on the black and white bread of literature? should it be the profession by which he lives, it is evident that under such a system he must beg, run in debt, or starve. And many have been beggars — many have got into debt; it is hardly possible to call up the ghost of a literary hero without the apparition of a catchpole at his elbow, for, like Jack the Giant-killer, our elder worthies, who had the Cap of Knowledge, found it equally convenient to be occasionally invisible, as well as to possess the Shoes of Swiftness, — and some have starved! Could the "Illustrious Dead" arise, after some Anniversary Dinner of the Literary Fund, and walk in procession round the table, like the resuscitated objects of the Royal Humane Society, what a melancholy exhibition they would make! I will not marshal them forth in order, but leave the show to the imagination of the reader. I doubt whether the Illustrious Living would make a much brighter muster. Supposing a general summons, how many day-rules — how many incognitos from abroad — how many visits to Monmouth Street would be necessary to enable the Members to put in an appearance! I fear, Heaven forgive me! some of our nobles even would show only Three Golden Balls in their coronets! If they do not actually starve or die by

poison in this century, it is, perhaps, owing partly to the foundation of the Literary Fund, and partly to the invention of the stomach-pump. But the true abject state of literature may be gathered from the fact, that with a more accurate sense of the destitution of the Professors than of the dignity of the Profession, a proposal has lately been brought forward for the erection of almshouses for paupers of "learning and genius" who have fallen into the sere and yellow leaf, under the specious name of Literary *Retreats;* or as a military man would technically and justly read such a record of our failures, Literary Defeats. Nor is this the climax: the proposal names half a dozen of these humble abodes to "make a beginning" with — a mere brick of the building — as if the projector, in his mind's-eye, saw a whole Mile-End Road of one-storied tenements in the shell, stretching from number six, and "to be continued."

> Visions of paupers, spare my aching sight,
> Ye unbuilt houses, crowd not on my soul!

I do hope, before we are put into yellow leather, very "small clothes," muffin caps, green-baize coats, and badges, and made St. Minerva charity boys at once — for *that* must be the first step — that the legislature will interfere and endeavor to provide better for our sere and yellow leaves, by protecting our black and white ones. Let the law secure to us a fair chance of getting our own, and perhaps, with proper industry, we may be able — who knows? — to build little snuggeries for ourselves. Under the present system the chances are decidedly against a literary man's even laying a good foundation of French bricks.

To further illustrate the nature of a copyright, we will suppose that an author retains it, or publishes, as it is called, on his own account. He will then have to divide amongst the trade, in the shape of commission allowances, from 40 to 45 per cent of the gross proceeds, leaving the stationer, printer, binder, advertising, and all other expenses to be paid out of the remainder. And here arises two important contingencies: 1. In order that the author may know the true number of the impressions, and consequently the correct amount of the sale, it is necessary the publisher should be honest. 2. For the author to duly receive his profits, his publisher must

be solvent. I intend no disrespect to the trade in general by naming these conditions; but I am bound to mention them, as risks adding to the insecurity of the property — as two hurdles which the rider of Pegasus may have to clear in his course to be a winner.

If I felt inclined to reflect on the trade, it would be to censure those dishonest members of it, who set aside a principle, in which the interests of authors and booksellers are identical — the inviolability of copyright. I need not point out the notorious examples of direct piracy at home, which have made the foreign offences comparatively venial; nor yet those more oblique plagiarisms, and close parodies, which are alike hurtful in their degree. Of the evil of these latter practices I fear our bibliopoles are not sufficiently aware; but that man deserves to have his head published in foolscap, who does not see that, whatever temporary advantages a system of piracy may hold out, the consequent swamping of literature will be ruinous to the trade, till eventually it may dwindle down to Four-and-Twenty Booksellers all in a Row, and all in "the *old* book line," pushing off back stock and bartering remainders.

But my letter is exceeding all reasonable length, and I will reserve what else I have to say till next post.

THOMAS HOOD.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR SIR, —

I have perhaps sufficiently illustrated the state of copyright, bad as it is, without the help of foreign intervention: not, however, without misgivings that I shall be suspected of quoting from some burlesque code, drawn up by a Rabelais in ridicule of the legislative efforts of a community of ouran-outangs — or a sample by Swift, of the constitution of the sages of Laputa — I have proved that literary property might almost be defined, reversing the common advertisement, as something "of use to everybody but the owner." To guard this precarious possession I have shown how the law provides: 1st. That if a work be of temporary interest it shall virtually be free for any *book*aneer to avail himself of its

pages and its popularity with impunity. 2d. That when time has stamped a work as of permanent value, the copyright shall belong to anybody or nobody. I may now add — as if to "huddle jest upon jest," —that the mere registry of a work, to entitle it to this precious protection, incurs a fee of eleven copies — in value, it might happen, some hundreds of pounds! Then to protect the author — "ay, such protection vultures give to the lambs" — I have instanced how he is responsible for all he writes — and subject to libel and so forth, to fines and imprisonment — how he may libel by proxy, and how he may practically be libelled himself without redress. I have evidenced how the law, that protects his brass-plate on the door, will wink at the stealing of his name by a brazen pirate — howbeit the author, for only accommodating himself by a forgery, might be transported beyond seas. I have set forth how, though he may not commit any breach of privilege, he may have his own words garbled, Frenchified, transmogrified, garnished, taken in or let out, like old clothes, turned, dyed, and altered. I have proved in short, according to my first position, that in the evil eye of the law, "we have neither character to lose nor property to protect;" that there is "one law for the rich and another for the poor" (*alias* authors); and that the weights and scales which Justice uses in literary matters ought to be broken before her face by the petty jury. And now let me ask, is this forlorn state — its professors thus degradingly appreciated, its products thus shabbily appraised — the proper condition of literature? The liberty of the press is boasted of as a part of the British Constitution; but might it not be supposed, that in default of a Censorship, some cunning Machiavel had devised a sly underplot for the discouragement of letters — an occult conspiracy to present "men of learning and genius" to the world's eye, in the pitiful plight of poor devils, starvelings, mumpers, paupers, vagrants, loose-fish, jobbers, needy and seedy ones, nobodies, ne'er-do-weels, shy coves, strollers, creatures, wretches, abjects, small debtors, borrowers, dependents, lackpennies, half-sirs, clapper-dudgeons, scamps, insolvents, maunderers, blue-gowns bedes-men, scarecrows, fellows about town, sneaks, scrubs, shabbies, rascal deer of the herd, animals "wi' lettered braw brass collars," but poor dogs for all that? Our family tree is ancient enough, for it is coeval

with knowledge; and mythology, the old original Herald's College, has assigned us a glorious blazonry. But would not one believe that some sneering Mephistopheles willing to pull down "God Almighty's gentlemen," had sought to supply the images of their heraldry with a scurvier gloss, e. g. a lady patroness with an ægis, that gives more stones than bread — a patron who dispenses sunshine in lieu of coal and candle — nine elderly spinsters, who have never married for want of fortune — a horse with wings, that failing oats, he may fly after the chaff that is driven before the wind — a forked mount, and no knife to it — a lot of bay-trees, and no custards — a spring of Adam's ale! In fact all the standing jests and taunts at authors and authorship have their point at poverty: such as Grub Street first-floors down the chimney — sixpenny ordinaries — second-hand suits — shabby blacks, holes at the elbow — and true as epaulette to the shoulder the hand of the bum-bailiff!

Unfortunately, as if to countenance such a plot as I have hypothetically assumed above, there is a marked disproportion, as compared with other professions, in the number of the literary men, who are selected for public honors and employments.

So far indeed from their having, as a body, any voice in the senate, they have scarcely a vote at the hustings; for the system under which they suffer is hardly adapted to make them forty shilling freeholders, much less to enable them to qualify for seats in the House. A jealous-minded person might take occasion to say, that this was but a covert mode of affecting the exclusion of men whom the gods have made poetical, and whose voices might sound more melodious and quite as pregnant with meaning as many a *vox et præterea nihil*, that is lifted up to Mr. Speaker. A literary man, indeed, — Sheridan — is affirmed by Lord Byron to have delivered the best speech that was ever listened to in Parliament, and it would even add force to the insinuation, that the rotten boroughs, averred to be the only gaps by which men merely rich in learning and genius could creep into the Commons, have been recently stopped up. Of course such a plot cannot be entertained; but in the mean time the effect is the same, and whilst an apparent slight is cast upon literature, the senate has probably been deprived of the musical wisdom of

many wonderful Talking Birds through the want of the Golden Waters. For instance, it might not only be profitable to hear such a man as Southey, who has both read history and written history, speak to the matter in hand, when the affairs of nations are discussed, and the beacon-lights of the past may be made to reflect a guiding ray into the London-like fogs of the future. I am quite aware that literary genius *per se* is not reckoned a sufficient qualification for a legislator, — perhaps not — but why is not a poet as competent to discuss questions concerning the public welfare, the national honor, the maintenance of morals and religion, or the education of the people, as a gentleman, without a touch of poetry about him, who had been schooling his intellects for the evening's debate by a course of morning whist? Into some of these honorary memberships, so to speak, a few distinguished men of letters might be safely franked, and if they did not exactly turn up trumps — I mean as statesmen — they would serve to do away with an awkward impression that literature, which as a sort of natural religion is the best ally of a revealed one, has been unkindly denied any share in that affectionate relationship which obtains between church and state. As for the Upper House, I will not presume to say, whether the dignity of that illustrious assembly would have been impaired or otherwise by the presence of a baron with the motto, *Poeta nascitur, non fit;* supposing literature to have taken a seat in the person of Sir Walter Scott beside the lords of law and war. It is not for me to decide whether the brain-bewitching art be worthy of such high distinction as the brain-bewildering art, or that other one described by a bard, himself a peer, as the "brain-spattering art;" but in the absence of such creations it seems a peculiar hardship that men of letters should not have been selected for distinctions; the "Blue Ribbon of Literature," for instance, most legitimately their due. Finally, as if to aggravate these neglects, literary men have not been consoled as is usual, for the loss of more airy gratifications by a share in what Justice Greedy would call "the substantials, Sir Giles, the substantials." They have been treated as if they were unworthy of public employments, at least with two exceptions. Burns, who held a post very much under government, and Wordsworth, who shares the reproach of "the loaves and fishes" for penny rolls and

sprats. The want of business-like habits, it is true, has been alleged against the fraternity; but even granting such a deficiency, might not the most practical idlers, loungers, and ramblers of them all fill their posts quite as efficiently as those personages, who are paid for having nothing to do, and never neglect his duty? Not that I am an admirer of sinecures except in the Irishman's acceptation of the word;* but may not such bonuses to gentlemen, who write as little as they well can, viz. their names to the receipts, appear a little like a wish to discountenance those other gentlemen, who write as much as they well can, and are at the expense of printing it besides.

I had better here enter a little protest against these remarks being mistaken for the splenetic and wrathful ebullitions of a morbid and addled egotism. I have not "deviated into the gloomy vanity of drawing from self." I charge the state, it is true, with backing literature as the Champion backed Cato — that is to say tail foremost — but I am far from considering myself as an over-looked, under-kept, wet-blanketed, hid-under-a-bushel, or lapped-in-a-napkin individual. I have never, to my knowledge, displayed any remarkable aptitude for business, any decided predilection for politics, or unusual mastery in political economy — any striking talent at "a multiplicity of talk" — and withal I am a very indifferent hand at a rubber. I have never like Bubb Doddington, expressed a determined ambition "to make a public figure, I had not decided what, but a public figure I was resolved to make."

Nay, more, in a general view, I am not anxious to see literary men "giving up to a party what was meant for mankind," or hanging like sloths on the "branches of the revenue," or even engrossing working-situations, such as gauger-ships, to the exclusion of humbler individuals, who like Dogberry, have the natural gifts of reading and writing, and nothing else, neither am I eager to claim for them those other distinctions, titles, and decorations, the dignity of which

* One Patrick Maguire. He had been appointed to a situation the reverse of a place of all work, and his friends who called to congratulate him, were very much astonished to see his face lengthen on the receipt of the news. "A sinecure is it!" exclaimed Pat. "The devil thank them for that same. Sure I know what a sinecure is: it's a place where there's nothing to do, and they pay you by the piece."

requires a certain affluence of income for its support. A few orders indeed, domestic or foreign, conferred through a bookseller hang not ungracefully on an author, at the same time that they help to support his slender income; but there would be something too ludicrous even for my humor in a star and no coat, a garter and no stockings, a coronet and no nightcap, a collar and no shirt! Besides the creatures have like the glowworm and the firefly (but at the head instead of the tail) a sort of splendor of their own, which makes them less in need of any adventitious lustre. If I have dwelt on the dearth of State Patronage, public employments, honors and emoluments, it was principally to correct a vulgar error, not noticed by Sir Thomas Browne; namely, that poets and their kind are "marygolds in the sun's eye," the world's favorite and pet children; whereas they are in reality its snubbed ones. It was to show that Literature, neglected by the government, and unprotected by the law, was placed in a false position; whereby its professors present such anomalous phenomena as high priests of knowledge without a surplus; enlarged minds in the King's Bench, schoolmasters obliged to be abroad, great scholars without a knife and fork and spoon, master minds at journey-work, moral magistrates greatly under-paid; immortals without a living, menders of the human heart breaking their own, mighty intellects begrudged their mite, great wits jumping into nothing good, ornaments to their country put on the shelf; constellations of genius under a cloud, eminent pens quite stumped up, great lights of the age with a thief in them, prophets to booksellers; my ink almost blushes from black to red whilst marking such associations of the divine ore with the earthly — but methinks 't is the metal of one of their scales in which we are weighed and found wanting. Poverty is the badge of all our tribe, and its reproach.

There is, for instance, a well-known taunt against a humble class of men, who live by their pens, which girding not at the quality of their work, but the rate of its remuneration, twits them as penny-a-liners! Can the world be aware of the range of the shaft? What, pray, was glorious John Milton, upon whom rested an after-glow of the Holy Inspiration of the sacred writers, like the twilight bequeathed by a midsummer sun? Why, he was, as you may reckon any time in

his divine "Paradise Lost," not even a ha'penny-a-liner; we have no proof that Shakespeare, the high priest of humanity, was even a farthing-a-liner; and we know that Homer not only sold his lines "gratis for nothing," but gave credit to all eternity! If I wrong the world, I beg pardon; but I really believe it invented the phrase of the *republic* of letters to insinuate that, taking the whole lot of authors together, they have not got a *sovereign* amongst them!

I have now reduced Literature, as an arithmetician would say, to its lowest terms. I have shown her like misery, —

> For misery is trodden on by many,
> And, being low, never relieved by any,

fairly ragged, beggared, and down in the dust, having been robbed of her last farthing by a pickpocket (that's a pirate). There she sits, like Diggon Davie, — "Her was her while it was daylight, but now her is a most wretched wight," — or rather like crazy Kate; a laughing-stock for the mob (that's the world), unprotected by the constable (that's the law), threatened by the beadle (that's the law, too), repulsed from the workhouse by the overseer (that's the government), and denied any claim on the parish funds. Agricultural distress is a fool to it! one of those counterfeit cranks," to quote from "The English Rogue," — "Such as pretend to have the falling sickness, and by putting a piece of white soap into the corner of their mouths will make the froth come boiling forth, to cause pity to the beholders." If we inquire into the causes of this depression, some must undoubtedly be laid at the doors of literary men themselves; but perhaps the greater proportion may be traced to the want of any definite ideas, amongst people in general, on the following particulars: — 1st. How an author writes; 2d. Why an author writes; 3d. What an author writes. And 1st, as to how he writes, upon which there is a wonderful diversity of opinions; one thinks that writing is "as easy as lying," and pictures the author sitting carefully at his desk "with his glove on," like Sir Roger De Coverley's poetical ancestor. A second holds that "the easiest reading is d——d hard writing," and imagines Time himself heating his brains over an extempore. A third believes in inspirations, i. e. that metaphors, quotations, classical allusions, historical illustrations, and even dramatic plots,

— all come to the coming author by intuition; whilst ready-made poems, like Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," are dictated to him in his sleep. Of course the estimate of his desert will rise or fall according to the degree of learned labor attributed to the composition; he who sees in his mind's-eye, a genius of the lamp, consuming gallons on gallons of midnight oil, will assign a rate of reward, regulated probably by the success of the Hull whalers, whilst the believer in inspiration will doubtless conceive that the author ought to be fed, as well as prompted, by miracle, — and accordingly bid him look up, like the Apostle on the old Dutch tiles, for a bullock coming down from heaven in a bundle. 2d. *Why* an author writes; and there is as wide a patchwork of opinions on this head as on the former. Some think that he writes for the present, — others, that he writes for posterity, and a few that he writes for antiquity. One believes that he writes for the benefit of the world in general, his own excepted, — which is the opinion of the law. A second conceives that he writes for the benefit of booksellers in particular, and this is the trade's opinion. A third takes it for granted that he writes for nobody's benefit but his own, which is the opinion of the green-room. He is supposed to write for fame, for money, for amusement, for political *ends*, and, by certain schoolmasters, "to improve his mind."

Need it be wondered at, that, in this uncertainty as to his motives, the world sometimes perversely gives him anything but the thing he wants. Thus the rich author, who yearns for fame, gets a pension, — the poor one, who hungers for bread, receives a diploma from Aberdeen, — the writer for amusement has the pleasure of a Mohawking review in a periodical; and the gentleman in search of a place has an offer from a sentimental milliner! 3d. What an author writes. The world is so much of a Champollion that it can understand hieroglyphics, if nothing else; it can comprehend outward visible signs, and grapple with a tangible emblem. It knows that a man on a table stands for patriotism, a man in a pulpit for religion, and so on, but it is a little obtuse as to what it reads in King Cadmus's types. A book hangs out no sign. Thus persons will go through a chapter, enforcing some principal duty of man towards his Maker, or his neighbor, without discovering that in all but the name they have

been reading a sermon. A solid mahogany pulpit is wanting to such a perception. They will con over an essay, glowing with the most ardent love of liberty, instinct with the noblest patriotism, and replete with the soundest maxims of polity without the remotest notion that, except its being delivered upon paper, instead of *vivâ voce*, they have been attending to a speech, — as for dreaming of the author as a being, who could sit in Parliament, and uphold the same sentiments, they would as soon think of chairing an abstract idea. They must see a *bonâ fide* wagon with its true blue, orange, or green flag to arrive at such a conclusion.

The material keeps the upper-hand. Hence the sight of a substantial Vicar may suggest the necessity of a parsonage and glebe, but the author is, according to the proverb, "out of sight, out of mind;" a spirituality not to be associated with such tangible temporalities as bread and cheese. He is condemned *par contumace* to dine *tête-à-tête* with the Barmecide or Duke Humphrey, whilst for want of a visible hustings or velvet cushion, the small still voice of his pages is never conceived of, as coming from a patriot, a statesman, a priest, or a prophet: as a case in point — there is a short poem by Southey called the "Battle of Blenheim" which, from the text of some poor fellow's skull, who fell in the great victory,

> For many a thousand bodies there
> Lay rotting in the sun,

takes occasion to ask what they killed each other for? and what good came of it in the end? These few quaint verses contain the very essence of a primary Quaker doctrine, yet lacking the tangible sign — a drab coat or a broad-brimmed hat — no member of the sect ever yet discovered that, in all but the garb, the peace-loving author was a Friend, moved by the spirit, and holding forth in verse in a strain worthy of the great Fox himself! Is such poetry, then, a *vanity*, or something worthy of all Quakerly patronage? Verily if the copyright had been valued at a thousand pounds the Society ought to have purchased it, — printed the poem as a tract — and distributed it by tens of thousands, yea, hundreds of thousands, till every fighting man in the army and navy had a copy, including the marines. The Society, however, has done nothing of the kind; and it has only acted like Society in

general towards literature, by regarding it as a vanity or a luxury, rather than a grand moral engine, capable of advancing the spiritual, as well as the temporal interests of mankind. It has looked upon poets and their kind as common men, and not as spirits that, like the ascending and descending angels in Jacob's vision, hold commerce with the sky itself, and help to maintain the intercourse between earth and Heaven.

I have yet a few comments to offer on the charges usually preferred against literary men, but shall reserve them for another and concluding letter.

THOMAS HOOD.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR SIR,—

NOW to the sins which have been laid at the doors, or tied to the knockers, of literary men: those offences which are to palliate or excuse such public slights and neglects as I have set forth; or, maybe, such private ones, as selling a presentation copy, perhaps a dedicatory one, as a bookseller would call the "Keepsake" with the author's autograph letters — waiving the *delicacy* of waiting for his death, or the policy, for, as Crabbe says, one's writings fetch then a better price, because there can be no more of them — at a sale of Evans's. Literary men, then, have been charged with being eccentric — and so are comets. They were not created to belong to that mob of undistinguishable — call them not stars, but sparks, constituting the Milky Way.

It is a taunt as old as Chesterfield's Letters, that they are not polished: no more was that Chesterfield's son.

They do not dress fashionably; for if they could afford it, they know better, in a race for immortal fame, than to be *outsiders*. Some, it has been alleged, have run through their estates, which might have been easily traversed at a walk; and one and all have neglected to save half-a-crown out of sixpence a day.

Their disinterestedness has been called imprudence, and their generosity extravagance, by parties, who bestow their charity like the miser would.*

* An illiterate personage, who always volunteered to go round with the

The only charge not a blank charge — that has been discharged against them — their poverty, has been made a crime, and, what is worse, a crime of their own seeking.

They have not, it is true, been notorious for hoarding or funding; the last would, in fact, require the creation of a stock on purpose for them — the Short Annuities. They have never any weight in the city, or anywhere else; in cash temperature their pockets are always at zero. They are not "the warm with," but "the cold without:" but it is to their credit — if they had any credit — that they have not worshipped Plutus.

The Muse and Mammon never were in partnership; and it would be a desperate speculation indeed to take to literature as the means of amassing money. He would be a simple Dick Whittington, indeed, who expected to find its ways paved with philosophers' stones: he must have Dantzic water, with 'ts gold leaf in his head, who thinks to find Castaly a Pactolus; ass, indeed, he must be, who dreams of browsing on Parnassus, like those asses who feed on a herb (a sort of mint?) that turns their very teeth to gold. A line-maker, gifted with brains the gods have made poetical, has no chance of making an independence — like Cogia Hassan Alhabbal, the rope-maker, gifted only with a lump of lead. Look into my palm, and if it contain the lines of poetry, the owner's fortune may be obtained at once — viz. a hill very hard to climb, and no prospect in life from the top. It is not always a Mutton Hill, Garlic Hill, or Cornhill (remember Otway), for meat, vegetable, or bread. Let the would-be Crœsus, then, take up a bank-pen and address himself to the Old Lady in Threadneedle Street, but not to the Muse; she may give him some "pinch-back," and pinch-front too, but little of the precious metals.

Authorship has been pronounced, by a judge on the bench, as but a hand-to-mouth business; and I believe few have ever set up in it as anything else; in fact, did not Crabbe, though a reverend, throw a series of summersets, at least mentally, on the receipt of a liberal sum from a liberal publisher, as if he had just won the capital prize in the grand lottery? Need

hat, but was suspected of saving his own pocket. Overhearing one day a hint to that effect, he made the following speech:—

"Other gentlemen puts down what they thinks proper, and so do I. Charity 's a private concern, and what I gives is nothing to nobody."

it be wondered at, then, if men who embraced literature more for love than lucre, should grasp the adventitious coins somewhat loosely; nay, purposely scatter abroad, like Boaz, a liberal portion of their harvest for those gleaners with whom they have, perhaps, had a hand-in-glove acquaintance — Poverty and Want? If there be the lively sympathy of the brain with the stomach that physiologists have averred, it is more than likely that there is a similar responsive sensibility between the head and the heart; it would be inconsistent, therefore, — it would be unnatural, if the same fingers that helped to trace the woes of human life were but as so many feelers of the Polypus Avarice, grasping everything within reach, and retaining it when got. We know, on the contrary, that the hand of the author of the "Village Poor House" was "open as day to melting charity;" so was the house of Johnson munificent in proportion to his means; and as for Goldsmith, he gave more like a rich Citizen of the World than one who had not always his own freehold.

But graver charges than improvidence have been brought against the literary character — want of principle, and offences against morality and religion.

It might be answered, pleading guilty, that in that case authors have only topped the parts allotted to them in the great drama of life — that they have simply acted like vagabonds by law and scamps by repute, "who have no character to lose or property to protect;" but I prefer asserting, which I do fearlessly, that literary men, as a body, will bear comparison in point of conduct with any other class. It must not be forgotten that they are subjected to an ordeal quite peculiar, and scarcely milder than the Inquisition. The lives of literary men are proverbially barren of incident, and consequently the most trivial particulars, the most private affairs, are unceremoniously worked up to furnish matter for their bald biographers. Accordingly, as soon as an author is defunct, his character is submitted to a sort of Egyptian post-mortem trial; or rather, a moral inquest, with Paul Pry for the coroner, and a judge of assize, a commissioner of bankrupts, a Jew brother, a Methodist parson, a dramatic licenser, a dancing master, a master of the ceremonies, a rat-catcher, a bone collector, a parish clerk, a schoolmaster, and a reviewer, for a jury.

It is the province of these personages to rummage, ransack,

scrape together, rake up, ferret out, sniff, detect, analyse, and appraise, all the particulars of the birth, parentage, and education, life, character, and behavior, breeding, accomplishments, opinions, and literary performances of the departed.

Secret drawers are searched, private and confidential letters are published, manuscripts intended for the fire are set in type, tavern bills and washing bills are compared with their receipts, copies of writs re-copied, inventories taken of effects, wardrobe ticked off by the tailor's accounts; by-gone toys of youth, billet-doux, snuff-boxes, canes, exhibited — discarded hobby-horses are trotted out — perhaps even a dissecting surgeon is called in to draw up a minute state of the corpse and its viscera, — in short, nothing is spared that can make an item for the clerk to insert in his memoir.

Outrageous as it may seem, this is scarcely an exaggeration; for example, who will dare to say that we do not know, at this very hour, more of Goldsmith's affairs than he ever did himself?

It is rather wonderful, than otherwise, that the literary character should shine out as it does after such a severe scrutiny. Moreover, it remains to be proved that the follies and failings attributed to men of learning and genius are any more their private property than their copyrights after they have expired.

There are certainly well-educated ignorant people, who contend that a little learning is a dangerous thing — for the poor. And as authors are poor, as a class, those horn-book monopolists may feel bound, in consistency, to see that the common errors of humanity are set down in the bill to letters. It is, of course, these black and white schoolmasters' dogs in a manger that bark and growl at the slips and backslidings of literary men; but to decant such cant, and to see through it clearly, it is only necessary to remember that a fellow will commit half the sins in the Decalogue, and all the crimes in the calendar — forgery excepted — without ever having composed even a valentine in verse, or the description of a lost gelding in prose. Finally, if the misdeeds of authors are to be pleaded in excuse of the neglect of literature and literary men, it would be natural to expect to see these practical slights and snubbings fall heaviest on those who have made themselves most obnoxious to rebuke. But the contrary is the case. I will not invidiously point out examples, but let

the reader search the record, and he will find that the lines which have fallen in pleasant places have belonged to men distinguished for anything rather than morality or piety. The idea, then, of merit having anything to do with the medals, must be abandoned, or we shall be prepared to admit a very extraordinary result. It is notorious that a foreign bird, for a night's warbling, will obtain as much as a native bard — not a second-rate one either — can realize in a whole year; an actor will be paid a sum per night equal to the annual stipend of many a curate; and the month's income of an opera dancer will exceed the revenue of a dignitary of the church.

But will any be bold enough to say, except satirically, that these disproportionate emoluments are due to the superior morality and piety of the concert-room, the opera, and the theatre? They are in a great measure, the acknowledgments of physical gifts — a well-tuned larynx — a well-turned figure, or light fantastic toes, not at all discountenanced in their vocation for being associated with light fantastic behavior.

Saving, then, an imputed infirmity of temper, — and has it not peculiar trials? — the only well-grounded failing the world has to resent, as a characteristic of literary men, is their poverty, whether the necessary result of their position or of a wilful neglect of their present interests, and improvidence for the future. But what is an author's future, as regards his worldly prosperity? The law, as if judging him incapable of having heirs, absolutely prevents his creating a property in copyrights, that might be valuable to his descendants. It declares that the interest of the literary man and literature are not identical, and commends him to the composition of catchpenny works, things of the day and hour; or, so to speak, encourages him to discount his fame. Should he, letting the present shift for itself, and contemning personal privations, devote himself, heart and soul, to some work or series of works, he may live to see his right and temporal interest in his books pass away from himself to strangers, and his children deprived of what, as well as his fame, is their just inheritance.

At the best, he must forego the superintendence of the publication, and any foretaste of his success, and, like Cumberland when he contemplated a legacy "for the eventual use

and advantage of a beloved daughter," defer the printing of his MSS. till after his death.

As for the present tense of his prosperity, I have shown that his possession is as open to inroad as any estate on the Border Lands in days of yore; such is the legal providence that watches over his imputed improvidence! The law which takes upon itself to guard the interests of lunatics, idiots, minors, and other parties incapable of managing their own affairs, not merely neglects to commonly protect, but connives at the dilapidation of the property of a class, popularly supposed to have a touch of that same incompetence.

It is, perhaps, rather the indifference of a generous spirit, which remembers to forget its own profit: but even in that case, if the author, like the girl in the fairy tale, drops diamonds and pearls from his lips, without stooping to pick up any for himself, the world he enriches is bound to see that he does not suffer from such a noble disinterestedness. Suppose, even, that he be a man wide awake to the value of money, the power it confers, the luxuries it may purchase, the consideration it commands — that he is anxious to make the utmost of his literary industry — and literary labor is as worthy of its hire as any other — there is no just principle on which he can be denied the same protection as any other trader.

It may happen also that his "poverty, and not his will, consents" to such a course.

In this imperfect world there is nothing without its earthly alloy; and whilst the mind of a poet is married to a body, he must perform the divine service of the Muses, without banishing his dinner service to the roof of the house, as in that Brazilian Cathedral which, for want of lead, is tiled with plates and dishes from the Staffordshire potteries. He cannot dwell even in the temple of Parnassus, but must lodge sometimes in a humbler abode, like the old Scotch songsters, with bread and cheese for its door-cheeks, and pancakes the rigging o't. Moreover as authors, Protestant ones at least, are not vowed to celibacy, however devoted to poverty, fasting, and mortification, there may chance to exist other little corporealities, sprouts, offsets, or suckers, which the nature of the law, as well as the law of nature, refers for sustenance to the parent trunk. Should our bards, jealous of these evidences of their mortality,

offer to make a present of them to the parish, under the plea of *mens divinior*, would not the overseer, or maybe the Poor Law Commissioner, shut the workhouse wicket in their faces, and tell them that the "mens divinior must provide for the men's wives and children"? Pure fame is a glorious draught enough, and the striving for it is a noble ambition; but alas! few can afford to drink it *neat*. Across the loftiest visions of the poet earthly faces will flit; and even while he is gazing on Castaly, little familiar voices will murmur in his ear, inquiring if there are no fishes, that can be eaten, to be caught in its waters!

It has happened, according to some inscrutable dispensation, that the mantle of inspiration has commonly descended on shoulders clad in cloth of the humblest textures. Our poets have been Scotch ploughmen, farmers' boys, Northamptonshire peasants, shoemakers, old servants, milk-women, basket-makers, steel-workers, charity-boys, and the like. Pope's *protégé*, Dodsley, was a footman, and wrote "The Muse in Livery." You may trace a hint of the double vocation in his "Economy of Human Life." *

Our men of learning and genius have generally been born, not with silver spoons in their mouths, but wooden ladles. Poetry, Goldsmith says, not only found him poor, but kept him so; but has not the law been hitherto lending a hand in the same uncharitable task? Has it not favored the "Cormorant by the Tree of Knowledge," the native Bookaneer? and "a plague the Devil hath added," as Sir J. Overbury calls the foreign pirate.

To give a final illustration of the working of the law of copyright, Sir Walter Scott, besides being a mighty master of fiction, resembled Defoe in holding himself bound to pay in full all the liabilities he had incurred. But the amount was immense, and he died no doubt prematurely, from the magnitude of the effort.

A genius so illustrious, united with so noble a spirit of integrity, doubly deserved a national monument, and a subscription was opened, for the purpose of preserving Abbotsford to his posterity, instead of a public grant to make it a literary

* "THE MAN OF EMULATION WHO PANTETH AFTER FAME. The examples of eminent men are in his visions by night — and his delight is to follow them (query, with a gold-headed cane) all the day long."

Blenheim. I will not stop to inquire whether there was more joy in France when Malbrook was dead than sorrow in Britain, or rather throughout the world, when Scott was no more; but I must point out the striking contrast between the two advertisements in a periodical paper, which courted my notice on the same page. One was a statement of the amount of the Abbotsford subscription, the other an announcement of a rival edition of one of Sir Walter Scott's works, the copyright of which had expired. Every one may not feel with me the force of this juxtaposition, but I could not help thinking that the interest of any of his immortal productions ought to have belonged either to his creditors or to his heritage.

Can there be heir-looms, I ask myself, and not head-looms? and looms too, that have woven such rich tissues of Romance? Why is a mental estate, any more than a landed one, made subject to such an Agrarian law? In spite of all my knowledge of ethics, and all my ignorance of law, I have never yet been able to answer these questions to my own satisfaction. Perchance Mr. Sergeant Talfourd will be prepared with a solution, but if not, I trust he will give us "the benefit of the doubt," and make an author's copyright heritable property, only subject to alienation by his own act, or in satisfaction of the claims of creditors. Such a measure will tend to relieve our worldly respectability; instead of being nobodies with nothing, we shall be, if not freeholders, a sort of copy-holders, with something between the sky and the centre, that we can call our own. It may be but a nominal possession, but if it were of any value, why should it be made common for the benefit of the Company of Stationers. They drink enough out of our living heads, without quaffing out of our skulls, like the kings of Dahomey. As to the probability of their revivals of authors, who were adored, but have fallen into neglect and oblivion — remembering how the trade boggled at "Robinson Crusoe," and the "Vicar of Wakefield," there would be as much chance of a speculative lawyer reviving such dormant titles! For my own part, I am far from expecting, personally, any pecuniary advantage from such an arrangement; but I have some regard for the abstract right. There is always a certain sense of humiliation attendant on finding that we are made exceptions, as if incapable or undeserving of the enjoyment of equal justice. And can there

be a more glaring anomaly than that, whilst our private property is thrown open and made common, we daily see other commons enclosed, and made private property? One thing is certain, that, by taking this high ground at once, and making copyright analogous to tenure of the soil itself — and it pays its land tax in the shape of a tax upon paper — its defence may be undertaken with a better grace against trespass at home or invasion from abroad. For, after all, what does the pirate or Bookaneer commit at present but a sort of piratical anachronism, by anticipating a period when the right of printing will belong to everybody in the world, including the man in the moon!

Such it appears to me is the grand principle upon which the future law of copyright ought to be based. I am aware that I have treated the matter somewhat commercially; but I have done so, partly because in that light principally the legislature will have to deal with it; and still more because it is desirable, for the sake of literature and literary men, that they should have every chance of independence, rather than be compelled to look to extraneous sources for their support.

Learning and genius, worthily directed, and united to common industry, surely deserve, at least, a competence; and that their possessor should be something better than a Jarkman; that is to say, "one who can read and write, yea some of them have a smattering in the Latin tongue, which learning of theirs advances them in office among the beggars." The more moderate in proportion the rate of the usual reward, the more scrupulously ought every particle of their interests to be promoted so as to spare, if possible, the necessity of private benefactions or public collections for the present distress, and "Literary Retreats" for the future. Let the weight and worth of literature in the state be formally recognized by the legislature; let the property of authors be protected, and the upholding of the literary character will rest on their own heads. They will, perhaps, recollect that their highest office is to make the world wiser and better; their lowest, to entertain and amuse it, without making it worse.

For the rest, bestow on literary men their full share of public honors and employments; concede to them, as they deserve, a distinguished rank in the social system, and they will

set about effacing such blots as now tarnish their scutcheons. The surest way to make a class indifferent to reputation is to give it a bad name. Hence literature having been publicly underrated, and its professors having been treated as vagabonds, scamps, fellows "without character to lose or property to protect," we have seen conduct to match: reviewers, forgetful of common courtesy, common honesty, and common charity, misquoting, misrepresenting, and indulging in the grossest personalities, even to the extent of ridiculing bodily defects and infirmities — political partisans bandying scurrilous names, and scolding like Billingsgate mermaids — and authors so far trampling on the laws of morals, and the rights of private life, as to write works capable of being puffed off as club books got up among the Snakes, Sneerwells, Candors, and Backbites, of the School for Scandal.

And now, before I close, I will here place on record my own obligations to literature: a debt so immense as not to be cancelled, like that of nature, by death itself. I owe to it something more than earthly welfare. Adrift early in life upon the great waters — as pilotless as Wordsworth's blind boy afloat in the turtle-shell — if I did not come to shipwreck, it was, that in default of paternal or fraternal guidance, I was rescued like the Ancient Mariner, by guardian spirits, "each one a lovely light," who stood as beacons to my course. Infirm health, and a natural love of reading, happily threw me, instead of worse society, into the company of poets, philosophers, and sages — to me good angels and ministers of grace. From these silent instructors — who often do more than fathers, and always more than god-fathers, for our temporal and spiritual interests — from these mild monitors, no importunate tutors, teasing mentors, moral taskmasters, obtrusive advisers, harsh censors, or wearisome lecturers, but delightful associates, I learned something of the divine, and more of the human religion. They were my interpreters in the House Beautiful of God, and my guides among the Delectable Mountains of Nature. They reformed my prejudices, chastened my passions, tempered my heart, purified my tastes, elevated my mind, and directed my aspirations. I was lost in a chaos of undigested problems, false theories, crude fancies, obscure impulses, and bewildering doubts, when these bright intelligences called my mental world out of darkness like a new

Creation, and gave it "two great lights," Hope and Memory, the past for a moon, and the future for a sun.

Hence have I genial seasons — hence have I
Smooth passions, smooth discourse and joyous thoughts,
And thus from day to day my little boat
Rocks in its harbor — lodging peaceably.
Blessings be with them, and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares; —
The poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!
O might my name be numbered among theirs,
How gladly would I end my mortal days.

THOMAS HOOD.

WHAT WILL THE WIGS DO NEXT?

APPENDIX.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

(A.) JOHN SCOTT.

THE event mentioned in the text as the immediate cause of Hood's introduction to a literary life was one of the most remarkable and most unfortunate of the quarrels of authors. The death of one of the parties, and the high position in the world of letters since occupied by the others, now all passed away, have hitherto suppressed allusion to the circumstances which provoked it, and have prevented any one from telling the whole truth in vindication of the memory of JOHN SCOTT. Even Talfourd, in his interesting chapter on the *London Magazine*, in his Final Memorials of Lamb, fails to render him entire justice; but, while he pays a well-deserved tribute to his candor, eloquence, and discrimination as a critic, and his authority and ability as an editor, he ascribes his attacks upon the conductors of *Blackwood's Magazine* to a "spurious chivalry," rather than to a manly and just indignation, and a strong conviction of duty.

As early as May, 1820, an article in the *London* reflected with great severity on *Blackwood*, more than hinting at all the objectionable features which were made the subject of subsequent more elaborate comment. In the November number of the *London* there was an article of more than a dozen pages, entitled *Blackwood's Magazine*, with the motto, "They do but jest — POISON IN JEST — no offence i' the world!" This paper was devoted to a serious examination of the course pursued by its principal writers, and to the fearless exhibition of their alleged coarseness and profligacy. It exposed the mystifications, the hoaxes, the forgeries, the frauds, perpetrated under the guise of juvenile indiscretions, and the irregularities of excessive animal spirits. It showed that nefarious assaults upon Coleridge and Wordsworth, and zealous defences of those eminent men, were made by the same individual; that when Z. made his virulent attack on character and feeling, and Mr. Wastle was of opinion that Z. went too far, and Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk expressed the regret and contrition of Blackwood's editors for having been betrayed into unguarded personalities, Z. and Wastle and Peter and the contrite editors were often the selfsame man, and always one of the same gang. These mock penitences and commiserations the article likened to the common trick of pickpockets, when the same rascals who have struck a gentleman from behind and filched his watch from his fob will come round to his face to pity and to pat him, with their mouth full of asseverations against the roguery and cruelty of the outrage of which he has been the victim. "Blackwood's men," it continues, "cannot be complimented with the invention of this manœuvre. Peter Morris, the hypocrite, in front, and Christopher North, the ruffian, behind, are

but varieties of the same personage, copied from the practice of a profession which is certainly more respectable than that of calumniator, though not quite so safe. Then honest *Reekie* [Blackwood] comes in as the smooth *receiver*, who is very sorry for the gentleman's loss; vows to Heaven that he desires no dealings but such as are in the way of fair trade, and is ready with all his heart to give up the article, or pay its value, if the aggrieved individual should demand it roughly, or talk about consequences."

This article calls Sir Walter Scott to account for having contributed to the magazine, and having exerted himself with might and main to elevate the co-editor of a slanderous periodical [Wilson] to a professorship in the metropolitan university of Scotland, and for having thus borne his testimony in favor of a work so infamous that it could be regarded only as a nuisance that must be abated. It claims the right to call upon Sir Walter, to know if he is to be considered as aiding the magazine in question, and to persist in holding the voluntary contributor and zealous recommender responsible for the work. It rebuts, in conclusion, the claim that the attacks of the magazine on Hunt, Haydon, Keats, and others were restrained within the limits of fair criticism, and that the writers had only "expressed simple, undisguised, and impartial opinions concerning the merits and demerits of men they never saw; nor thought of for one moment otherwise than as in their capacity of authors." This averment it pronounces grossly false, and promises proof that they had never uttered a word of genuine criticism on the productions of these persons, and had done nothing but abuse their *faces, dress, profession, and conduct*, under the influence of no better feeling than personal rancor or sordid greed.

Such an article was well described by the writer of it as a *branding* one, and it was followed up in the December number of the *London* by a still more severe paper, entitled, *The Mohock Magazine*. This article uses with great freedom epithets that would seem harsh and vituperative, if it were not for the specific facts by which they are shown to have been well deserved. It denounces the magazine as the infamous Scotch hoax. It avers, that in two years' time it had been called upon to pay £1,000 in forfeiture to individuals it had libelled, and that in no instance had it attempted to defend, justify, or even explain its assertions. Dr. Morris had paid £400 to an injured tradesman. The publisher, Murray, had torn his name from the title-page of the magazine, and the magazine announced that it had discharged Murray. Specifications were given of abuse of Coleridge, so gross that we will not soil our page with them. Wilson's attacks on Wordsworth were cited under one signature, and his defences under another. The forgery of signatures, and the dishonest use of real names, were illustrated by the case of James Hogg, whom the magazine had treated as its fool's capped and bell-coated Zany, and whom it had endeavored to inculpate as the author of its most offensive articles; among others, of a coarse insult to Mr. Napier and an attack on Professor Playfair. After these and other specifications in support of its charges, the paper concludes with the averment that three fourths of the items on the writer's memoranda were unnoticed, and that otherwise he might have had the offenders as fast as a felon who is double-ironed in Newgate.

We know not where to look, in the annals of periodical literature, for anything more severe and well sustained than this attack of JOHN SCOTT upon these literary outlaws. It was evident that WILSON and LOCKHART had found their match at least, if not their master. A paragraph in the December number of *Blackwood*, in the words that follow, was tantamount to a cognovit: —

"It is with sincere pain that we find the writers in a paltry publication, which is hardly known beyond the limits of Cockaigne, are in the greatest

consternation and alarm lest we should fall upon them. We beg to assure them that we have no such intention; and if they will only have the condescension to send us their names, — for, celebrated as they are among themselves, they are quite unknown here, — we shall take care not to admit anything into our pages that might lessen their insignificance."

This paragraph was reprinted in the *London* for January, 1821, with comments in the old vein, and the Blackwood men found the matter was becoming too serious to be treated with silent contempt. On the 10th of that month Mr. Scott was waited upon by a gentleman who said he was commissioned by Mr. John Gibson Lockhart to inquire whether Mr. Scott considered himself responsible for a series of three articles which had appeared in the London Magazine, discussing the conduct and management of *Blackwood's Magazine*, and regarded by Mr. Lockhart as offensive to his feelings and injurious to his honor. In reply, Mr. Scott addressed a note to the gentleman who waited on him, informing him that if Mr. Lockhart's motives in making the inquiry were such as gentlemen usually respect, there would be no difficulty in giving it a direct answer. At a second interview Mr. Lockhart's friend stated that no legal proceedings were contemplated, and that Mr. Lockhart's object was to receive an apology, or "such other satisfaction as a gentleman was entitled to." Mr. Scott said that it only remained for him to ask if Mr. Lockhart was on the spot; and whether, in the event of Mr. Scott's being prepared to avow the relation in which he stood towards the *London Magazine*, Mr. Lockhart might be considered equally prepared to declare distinctly the nature of his connection with *Blackwood's Magazine*.

Learning that Mr. Lockhart was not in London, but in Edinburgh, and that his friend was expressly instructed that no preliminary explanation whatever was to be expected, Mr. Scott declined to make any further allusion to the *London Magazine* on Mr. Lockhart's call.

A few days afterwards Lockhart's friend, Mr. Christie, again called on Mr. Scott, and delivered him a letter from Mr. Lockhart, dated in London. This letter demanded of Mr. Scott, in the event of his not disavowing any connection with the offending articles in the *London Magazine*, such an apology as might seem proper and fitting, or to arrange with Mr. Christie the particulars of the only alternative that could be offered or accepted. Mr. Scott immediately declared that, since Mr. Lockhart was now in London, he distinctly avowed himself to be the responsible editor of the *London Magazine*, and expected from Mr. Lockhart an equally frank statement as to his concern with the management of *Blackwood's Magazine*, more particularly as his pretension to having been unfairly treated by Mr. Scott depended on the real state of his connection with that work. Mr. Christie declared, in reply, that Mr. Lockhart would make no preliminary statement whatever, and demanded of Mr. Scott to name his friend. This Mr. Scott declined to do, until Mr. Lockhart should have made the necessary previous explanation. In the course of the same evening Mr. Scott drew up in writing a memorandum designed to prevent any misconception of his sentiments, which was delivered to Mr. Lockhart very early the next morning. In this paper he insisted upon his right to a disavowal by Mr. Lockhart of his having been concerned under fabricated names, or anonymously, with that very infamous publication, *Blackwood's Magazine*, before it could be conceded that his motives in applying to Mr. Scott were "of a nature such as gentlemen usually respect." If Mr. Lockhart would, even at that time, make a disavowal of having been in any way concerned in the system of imposition and scandal adopted in that magazine, Mr. Scott would consent to recognize his demand made through Mr. Christie, and in that event only Mr. Christie was referred to Mr. Horatio Smith as Mr. Scott's friend to make

the necessary arrangements under the circumstances. Mr. Christie called upon Mr. Smith that evening, but was not prepared to comply with Mr. Scott's condition; and a long interview terminated with the repeated assurance to Mr. Christie that Mr. Scott was prepared to give Mr. Lockhart satisfaction, if he could make the required avowal, and Mr. Smith expressed his entire concurrence in the sentiments of Mr. Scott's last communication.

Mr. Lockhart on the 19th addressed a note to Mr. Scott, in which he offered Mr. Scott any explanation on any subject in which Mr. Scott's personal feelings and honor could be concerned, "in the hope, and on the understanding, that Mr. Scott will then no longer delay giving Mr. Lockhart the explanation and satisfaction alluded to in Mr. Scott's communication."

On the day following, Mr. Scott addressed another communication to Mr. Lockhart, in which he limited his demand for explanation to a requirement that Mr. Lockhart should declare upon his honor, in explicit terms, that he had never derived money from any connection direct, or indirect, with the management of that work, and that he had never stood in a situation giving him directly, or indirectly, a pecuniary interest in its sale. Mr. Lockhart sent a reply in writing by Mr. Christie, which Mr. Scott refused to hear, when Mr. Lockhart "found himself compelled" to address the following final note to Mr. Scott: —

"Mr. Lockhart, in consequence of Mr. Scott's having refused to act towards him according to the rules by which gentlemen are accustomed to regulate their conduct, thinks it necessary to inform Mr. Scott that he, Mr. Lockhart, considers him as a liar and a scoundrel. Mr. Lockhart also thinks proper to inform Mr. Scott that it is his intention to set off for Scotland on Tuesday morning, bearing with him no other feelings in regard to Mr. Scott, except the supreme contempt with which every gentleman must contemplate the utmost united baseness of falsehood and poltroonery."

In about two hours, Mr. Scott replied in these terms: —

"Mr. Scott has just received and opened (not knowing the seal) the last note addressed to him by Mr. Lockhart, and thinks it only necessary to say, that he considers it as coming from the Editor of Blackwood's Magazine."

The February number of the *London Magazine* contained a statement of what had taken place between the parties up to the time of publication. A second statement was printed by Mr. Scott, and a narrative was also published by Mr. Lockhart, with a statement prefixed which he had denied to Mr. Scott, to the effect that he had occasionally contributed articles to *Blackwood's Magazine*, but was in no sense of the word editor or conductor of it, and was not deriving, and never had derived, any emolument whatever from any management of it.

Mr. Scott's second statement called forth a counter statement from Mr. Christie. On its appearance Mr. Scott, with his friend Mr. P. G. Patmore, proceeded to Mr. Christie's lodgings, and demanded an apology or instant satisfaction. Mr. Christie refused the former, and expressed his readiness without loss of time to accept the alternative. They met at 9 o'clock the same evening, the 16th of February, on a field between Chalk Farm tavern and Primrose Hill. Mr. Scott was attended by his friend Mr. Patmore and Mr. Pettigrew, a medical gentleman. The night was foggy, but the moon shone with sufficient brightness to give the parties a full view of each other. Mr. Scott fell on the second fire. He was removed to Chalk Farm tavern, where the ball was extracted, and for some days hopes were entertained of his recovery. A fever set in, however, and on the 27th of February he died.

At the coroner's inquest, Dr. Darling, his attending physician, testifies that, in conversation with him, Mr. Scott, referring to his wound, said: "This

ought not to have taken place; there was no occasion for a second fire." After a short pause, he proceeded: "All that I required from Mr. Christie was a declaration that he meant no reflection on my character; this he refused, and the meeting became inevitable. On the field Mr. Christie behaved well, and when all was ready for the first fire, he called out, 'Mr. Scott, you must not stand there; I see your head above the horizon; you give me an advantage.' I believe he could have hit me then if he liked. After the pistols were reloaded, and everything ready for a second fire, Mr. Trail called out, 'Now, Mr. Christie, take your aim, and do not throw away your advantage as you did last time.' I called out immediately, 'What! did not Mr. Christie fire at me?' I was answered by Mr. Patmore, 'You must not speak; it is of no use now to talk; you have nothing now for it but firing.' The signal was immediately given; we fired, and I fell."

The jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against Mr. Christie, Mr. Trail, and Mr. Patmore. Their trial took place on the 13th of April, at the Old Bailey, before Chief Justice Abbott and Mr. Justice Park. The court was crowded. As soon as the judges had taken their seats, Mr. Christie and Mr. Trail, who appeared to be about twenty-five years of age, and were dressed in deep mourning, surrendered in form to the clerk of assizes, and were immediately placed at the bar. Mr. Patmore did not make his appearance. The first witness examined was Mr. Pettigrew, the surgeon on the field, who stated the particulars of the duel, and the declaration of Mr. Scott, after being wounded, that all had been fair and honorable. He described the anxiety and agony of Mr. Christie on hearing Mr. Scott's situation, and his exclamation, "Good God! why was I permitted to fire a second time? I fired first down the field." The facts were proved as on the inquest, without any additional particulars.

The Lord Chief Justice then informed Mr. Christie, that the time for his defence had arrived. Mr. Christie, in a voice almost inaudible from emotion, said that he should merely call witnesses to his general character and habits of life. Mr. Trail replied to a similar suggestion in the same terms. A great number of very respectable persons were then examined as to the character of the prisoners.

At the close of the case, the Chief Justice instructed the jury as to the law. In the case of duels, he said, if parties in heat of blood went out and fought with deadly weapons, then the law, allowing for the frailty of human nature, deemed the party killing guilty of manslaughter only; but if, yielding to a false notion of honor, they went out upon deliberation and in cool blood to fight, then the death of one man fixed the crime of murder upon all concerned, — upon seconds (frequently the more culpable parties) as well as upon principals. The judge suggested that a question might arise as to whether or not the prisoners at the bar were the real perpetrators of the crime, and alluded to the declaration of Mr. Scott that all was fair, and to Mr. Christie's exclamation that he was compelled to fire in self-defence, not as ideas that the law recognized, but as circumstances entitled to the attention of the jury. The parties might have met deliberately and in cool blood, and under those circumstances the first fire might have taken place. Had death followed that fire, such death would have been murder; but it was possible that Mr. Christie, having forborne to take aim the first time, might have fired his second shot under an impulse of immediate anger, produced by the failure of his pacific proceeding; and, in that case, although his adversary fell, the crime amounted only to manslaughter. The Lord Chief Justice concluded by recommending to the jury, in a case of doubt, to take the side of mercy, and by observing (upon the excellent characters which the prisoners had received) that unfortunately men of the most exemplary humanity and benevolent feeling were too often led to

take part in transactions which led to the loss of life on one side, and to remorse and repentance during life on the other.

The jury, after a deliberation of twenty-five minutes, returned a verdict of *not guilty*. Mr. Christie and Mr. Trail then retired from the bar, amid the congratulations of the friends who surrounded them.

Such were the circumstances of one of the most memorable of the quarrels of authors. There can be no question that *Blackwood's Magazine* had rendered itself justly obnoxious to censure as unsparing and personal as that which John Scott bestowed upon it. Even its conductors must have admitted its justice. We are not aware that Lockhart ever alluded to it in his subsequent writings; but we regret to add that Wilson, in more than one instance afterwards, referred to Scott in language which showed that the wounds he inflicted had not been healed by time or atoned for by death.

(B.) JANUS WEATHERCOCK.

In the names of the contributors to the *London Magazine* given in the text, that of Janus Weathercock is omitted, — one of its earliest correspondents, a mourner at the death-bed of its original editor, the friend and admirer of Charles Lamb, and the first to appreciate fully, and describe better than any one else has done, the various merits and powers of Hood himself. In the *London Magazine* for January, 1823, is an article by Weathercock, devoted to a genial commentary on the contributors, — Barry Cornwall, Clare, Allan Cunningham, Elia, Hood, and others. The whole article is interesting and characteristic, but in a few rapid touches he has given a sketch of Hood as he was in 1822, which no one can fail to recognize in 1860. We copy it at length: —

"Young Theodore! — young in years, not in power! Our new Ovid! — only more imaginative! — Painter to the visible eye — and the inward; — commixture of, what the superficial deem, incongruous elements! — Instructive living proof, how close lie the founts of laughter and tears! Thou fermenting brain — oppressed, as yet, by its own riches! Though melancholy would seem to have touched thy heart with her painful (salutary) hand, yet is thy fancy mercurial, — undepressed; and sparkles and crackles more from the contact, as the northern lights when they near the frozen pole. How! is the fit not on? Still is 'Lycus' without mate! Who can mate him but thyself? Let not the shallow induce thee to conceal thy depth. Leave '*Old Seamen*,' — the strain thou held'st was of a higher mood; — there are others for your 'Sketches *from* Nature,' (as they truly call 'em,) . . . . . and such small deer! As for thy word-gambols, thy humor, thy fantastics, thy curiously conceited perceptions of similarity in dissimilarity, of coherents in incoherents, they are brilliantly suave, innocuously exhilarating: — but not a step farther, if thou lovest thy proper peace! Read the fine of the eleventh and the whole of the twelfth chapter of Tristram Shandy; and believe them, dear Theodore! O most truly! For *others* (not for thee) is the following paragraph thence quoted: 'Trust me, this unwary pleasantry of thine, will sooner or later bring thee into scrapes and difficulties, which no afterwit can extricate thee out of. In these sallies, too oft I see it happens that a person laughed at considers himself in the light of a person injured, with all the rights of such a situation belonging to him, and when thou viewest him in that light too, and reckonest up his friends, his family, his kindred, and allies, and musterest

up with them the many recruits which will list under him from a sense of common danger, 't is no extravagant arithmetic to say, that for every ten jokes thou hast got a hundred enemies; and till thou hast gone on, and raised a swarm of wasps about thine ears, and art half stung to death by them, thou wilt never be convinced it is so.' "

In one of his letters Lamb speaks of "kind, light-hearted Wainwright, their Janus," as the sometime "best stay" of the London: and when MOXON started the *Englishman's Magazine*, advised him to secure the aid of Proctor or of Janus Weathercock, and adds that "both of their prose is capital." In the original of Lamb's essay on "The Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis," as it appeared in the Magazine, there was the following N. B.: "I am glad to see JANUS veering about to the old quarter. I feared he had been rust-bound. C. being asked why he did not like Gold's 'London' as well as ours — it was in poor S.'s time — replied, —

'*Because there is no* WEATHERCOCK,
And that 's the reason why.' "

The individual represented by Janus was one Thomas Griffith Wainwright, whose appearance and surroundings in the days of the *London* are familiar to our readers from the graphic description by Talfourd, in his "Final Memorials of Lamb." He was, in those days, a gay, dashing dandy, with a half-military air, — a park lounger, an habitual attendant of the opera, and a constant visitor of the picture-galleries and print-shops, where he gathered materials for the assuming, egotistical, but very readable and magazinish articles which he contributed to the *London*. Talfourd says that Lamb thought that he really liked him, and mistook his vapid gayety for the playful effusion of a very guileless nature. His contempt for everything but elegant and expensive enjoyment marked at that time his ruling passion, and furnishes the key to his subsequent history.

In 1829 Wainwright went with his wife to visit his uncle, from whom he had expectancies which were shortly realized. The property inherited at his uncle's decease was soon squandered. In April, 1830, Mrs. Wainwright, with her step-sister, appeared at the Palladium insurance office in London, and effected a policy on the life of the latter, Helen Abercrombie, a handsome, blooming girl of one and twenty, for £3,000 for three years only. Similar visits were made to several other offices with a result equally favorable, until at the end of six months there was the large amount of £18,000 dependent on the life of this young lady, who was the daughter of a deceased officer, with no property whatsoever but a pension of £10 a year from the Ordnance.

In the mean time Wainwright's affairs became desperate. He forged several powers of attorney to draw money from the Bank of England. This money was soon spent, and everything in his possession becoming pledged, down to his household furniture, he took furnished apartments for himself, his wife, and two sisters-in-law. Immediately afterwards Miss Abercrombie made her will in favor of her unmarried sister Madeline, and appointed Wainwright sole executor, assigning to him the policy in the Palladium office. One evening in December the whole party went to the theatre. The evening was wet, but they walked home together, and partook of oysters and other refreshments at supper. That night Miss Abercrombie was taken ill. A few days afterwards she took powders which her attending physician did not remember to have prescribed; and when Mr. and Mrs. Wainwright returned from a long walk, they found that she was dead. There was a *post mortem* examination, which revealed only a great effusion on the brain, caused, it was stated, by extraordinary violence of vomiting.

Mr. Wainwright as executor, and trustee, lost no time in applying to the

offices for the results of the policies. In 1831 he commenced an action against the Imperial Life Insurance Company on a policy effected on the 20th of October, in the year preceding, for £3,000. The suit was hung up by injunction till February, 1835, and was tried in June, before Lord Abinger and a special jury. The defence was that the insurance was really effected for the benefit of the plaintiff himself, who was the party really interested. The jury were unable to agree. The plaintiff resided in England till a short time before the trial, when he went to France, with the view of avoiding criminal prosecution for his forgeries on the Bank of England. On a second trial the Company obtained a verdict, and Wainwright left Boulogne, where he was then residing, passed through France under a feigned name, was apprehended by the French police, and being found with strychnine in his possession, was confined at Paris for six months.

On his release, he ventured to London with the intention of remaining only forty-eight hours. Incautiously venturing to the window of his hotel near Covent Garden, he was recognized by a person passing, and information was communicated to the Bank. He was apprehended. A consultation was held among the parties interested to determine whether he should be proceeded against for the terrible charges growing out of the fate of Helen Abercrombie, or whether he should be tried for the forgeries only. The latter course was adopted. He was found guilty, and condemned to transportation for life.

In 1846 Sir Edward Lytton published his novel of "Lucretia," and Wainwright was the author's study for the character of Varney. The finale of his story is given in the following paragraph from the London Literary Gazette of December 8th, 1849: —

"Mr. Wainwright, so celebrated in the annals of crime, and the dark hero of Bulwer's novel, is stated in the Manchester Examiner to have died lately in the utmost misery, in New South Wales. For a time he earned his subsistence by teaching drawing; but it is probable that the publication to which we have alluded caused the 'forger' to be deemed an atrocious murderer, and so cut off his means, and led to his so perishing in the dreadful manner described."

(C.) JOHN CLARE.

THE Northamptonshire peasant is almost the last survivor of the brilliant circle of contributors who flourished in the London Magazine, and with regard to him Hood's worst forebodings have been realized. He is now sixty-seven years of age, and was recently living in a private asylum for the Insane at Highbeach. His parents were parish paupers, and in the midst of hard work and privations Clare learned to read, and was able to cultivate a native talent for poetry, which he finally sought to turn to a worldly account. "'T was working alone in the lime-pits of Ryhall, in the dead of winter, 1818," — these are his own words, — "when, knowing it impossible for me to pay a shoemaker's bill of more than three pounds, having only eighteen pence to receive at night, I resolved upon publishing proposals for printing a little volume of poems by subscription; and at dinner-time I wrote a prospectus, with a pencil, and walked over to Stamford at night, to send it by the post to Mr. Hanson, a printer, at Market Deeping."

The prospectus was printed, and fell into the hands of a provincial bookseller, who thought there was the germ of a good thing in it, and the result was the publication of "Poems, descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery, by John Clare, a Northamptonshire Peasant," the second edition of which, in a crown octavo of 213 pages, was issued, in London, in 1820. Clare was favorably reviewed in the Quarterly, went up to the great metropolis, made friends, and led for a while the life which Hood describes in the text. He received considerable sums of money, by donation and otherwise, lost them, and at length, in 1837, became the inmate of the institution to which we have above referred, — the victim of "lionizing."

In 1840, his physician, Dr. Allen, addressed a letter to the *Times* newspaper, with the view of calling the attention of Clare's old friends and patrons to his condition. Dr. Allen stated that in bodily health the poet was well, but that he was haunted by the spectre of poverty. Though unable in ordinary writing or conversation to preserve for any length of time the appearance of sanity, his power of ratiocination seemed to be restored when he attempted poetry, and his effusions in verse, produced in this state of eclipse, are regarded as psychological curiosities.

(D.) EDWARD HERBERT.

THE reference to the runaway ring at Wordsworth's Peter Bell recalls the very amusing letter of Lamb to the poet, in which he comments on the *two* Peters which had just made their appearance. About a week previously to the republication, in 1819, of Wordsworth's tale in verse, with this title, the wits of London were entertained with the *jeu d'esprit* to which we presume Hood intends to make allusion. It was another Peter Bell, claiming to be the real Simon Pure, and was attributed at the time to the author of the Rejected Addresses. From what Hood says, it would seem to have been the work of his brother-in-law Reynolds, whose scattered eccentricities would form a very pleasant collection. He was a man of rare cleverness, and the preface to *his* Peter Bell, as a laughable caricature, is worth the space it will fill in explanation of Hood's allusion.

"PREFACE.

"It is now a period of one and twenty years since I first wrote some of the most perfect compositions (except certain pieces I have written in my later days) that ever dropped from poetical pen. My heart has been right and powerful all its years. I never thought an evil or a weak thought in my life. It has been my aim and my achievement to deduce moral thunder from butter-cups, daisies, celandines, and (as a poet scarcely inferior to myself hath it) 'such small deer.' Out of sparrows' eggs I have hatched great truths, and with sextons' barrows have I wheeled into human hearts piles of the weightiest philosophy. I have persevered with a perseverance truly astonishing, in persons of not the most pursy purses; but to a man of my inveterate morality and independent stamp (of which Stamps I am proud to be a distributer) the sneers and scoffings of impious Scotchmen, and the neglect of my poor uninspired countrymen, fall as the dew upon the thorn (on which plant I have written an immortal stanza or two), and are as fleeting as the spray of the waterfall (concerning which waterfall I have

composed some great lines which the world will not let die). Accustomed to mountain solitudes, I can look with a calm and dispassionate eye upon that fiend-like, vulture-souled, adder-fanged critic, whom I have not patience to name, and of whose Review I loathe the title and detest the contents. Philosophy has taught me to forgive the misguided miscreant, and to speak of him only in terms of patience and pity. I love my venerable Monarch and the Prince Regent. My ballads are the noblest pieces of verse in the whole range of English poetry, and I take this opportunity of telling the world I am a great man. Milton was also a great man. Ossian was a blind old fool. Copies of my previous works may be had in any numbers, by application at my publishers.

"Of Peter Bell I have only this much to say: it completes the simple system of natural narrative, which I began so early as 1798. It is written in that pure, unlabored style, which can only be met with among laborers; and I can safely say, that, while its imaginations spring beyond the reach of the most imaginative, its occasional meaning occasionally falls far below the meanest capacity. As these are the days of counterfeits, I am compelled to caution my readers against them, 'for such are abroad.' However, I here declare this to be the true Peter; this to be the old original Bell. I commit my ballad confidently to posterity. I love to read my own poetry: it does my heart good. W. W.

"N. B. — The novel of Rob Roy is not so good as my Poem on the same subject."

(E.) CHARLES LAMB.

THAT the relations between Lamb and Hood were of the most affectionate and intimate character is well known; but their practical jokes upon each other were sometimes carried quite as far as the very license of friendship could tolerate. Lamb even took it in good part, notwithstanding his horror of annuals, when Hood affixed his name to the following prose sketch, which appeared in the *Gem*, and which is really one of Hood's own.

"A WIDOW

"Hath always been a mark for mockery, — a standing butt for wit to level at. Jest after jest hath been huddled upon her close cap, and stuck, like burrs, upon her weeds. Her sables are a perpetual 'Black Joke.'

"Satirists — prose and verse — have made merry with her bereavements. She is a stock character on the stage. Farce bottleth up her crocodile tears, or labelleth her empty lachrymatories. Comedy mocketh her precocious flirtations. Tragedy even girdeth at her frailty, and twitteth her with 'the funeral baked meats coldly furnishing forth the marriage tables.'

"I confess, when I called the other day on my kinswoman G——, then in the second week of her widowhood, and saw her sitting, her young boy by her side, in her recent sables, I felt unable to reconcile her estate with any risible associations. The Lady with a skeleton moiety — in the old print, in Bowles's old shop-window — seemed but a type of her condition. Her husband — a whole hemisphere in love's world — was deficient. One complete side — her left — was death-stricken. It was a matrimonial paralysis,

unprovocative of laughter. I could as soon have tittered at one of those melancholy objects that drag their poor dead-alive bodies about our streets.

"It seems difficult to account for the popular prejudice against lone women. There is a majority, I trust, of such honest, decorous mourners as my kinswoman: yet are widows, like the Hebrew, a proverb and a byword amongst nations. From the first putting on of the sooty garments, they become a stock joke — chimney-sweep or blackamore is not surer — by mere virtue of their nigritude.

"Are the wanton amatory glances of a few pairs of graceless eyes, twinkling through their cunning waters, to reflect so evil a light on a whole community? Verily the said benighted orbs of that noble relict, the Lady Rachel Russell, — blinded through unserene drops for her dead Lord, — might atone for all such oglings!

"Are the traditional freaks of a Dame of Ephesus, or a Wife of Bath, or a Queen of Denmark, to cast so broad a shadow over a whole sisterhood? There must be, methinks, some more general infirmity — common, probably, to all Eve-kind — to justify so sweeping a stigma.

"Does the satiric spirit, perhaps, institute splenetic comparisons between the lofty poetical pretensions of posthumous tenderness and their fulfilment? The sentiments of Love especially affect a high heroical pitch, of which the human performance can present, at best, but a burlesque parody. A widow, that hath lived only for her husband, should die with him. She is flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; and it is not seemly for a mere rib to be his survivor. The prose of her practice accords not with the poetry of her professions. She hath done with the world — and you meet her in Regent Street. Earth hath now nothing left for her — but she swears and administers. She cannot survive him — and invests in the *Long* Annuities.

"The romantic fancy resents, and the satiric spirit records, these discrepancies. By the conjugal theory itself, there ought to be no widows; and, accordingly, a class that by our milder manners is merely ridiculed, on the ruder banks of the Ganges is literally *roasted*.

"C. LAMB."

THE END.

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